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# HUDSON'S ESSAYS ON ENGLISH STUDIES

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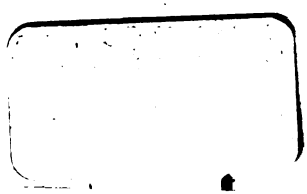

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Sincerely yours,
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# ESSAYS ON

# ENGLISH STUDIES

BY

HENRY N. HUDSON, LL.D.

EDITED, WITH PREFACE, INTRODUCTION, AND NOTES

BY

A. J. GEORGE, LITT.D. (AMHERST)

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, NEWTON HIGH SCHOOL

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TO

ROBERT HUDSON GEORGE

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Yet it is just
That here in memory of all books which lay
Their sure foundations in the heart of man

. . . . . .

That I should here assert their rights, attest
Their honors, and should, once for all, pronounce
Their benediction; speak of them as Powers
Forever to be hallowed; only less,
For what we are and what we may become,
Than Nature's self, which is the breath of God,
Or His pure Word by miracle revealed.

WORDSWORTH

If by great authors the many are drawn up into unity, national character is fixed, a people speaks, the past and the future are brought into communication with each other, — if such men are, in a word, the spokesmen and prophets of the human family, — it will not answer to make light of Literature or to neglect its study; rather we may be sure that, in proportion as we master it, and imbibe its spirit, we shall ourselves become in our own measure ministers of like benefits to others.

JOHN HENRY CARDINAL NEWMAN



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# PREFACE

In 1851 there was published in Boston an edition of Shakespeare's plays in eleven volumes, edited by Henry N. Hudson. This edition — the second by an American, Verplanck's being the first — at once attracted the attention of students of literature in Europe and America because of the independence, originality, and suggestiveness revealed in the analysis of the characters, and the insight, sympathy, and sanity of the æsthetic criticism. As a result the editor soon became recognized as one whose opinions challenged attention as did those of Gervinus of Heidelberg and Dowden of Dublin. Professor Hudson's object, everywhere manifest, even in his earlier work, was to quicken in the minds and hearts of readers a love for Shakespeare, as a man and artist, by bringing them into vital relations with his manifold revelations of human life.

Few of those who have found pleasure in teaching the English classics are aware of what a debt they owe to Professor Hudson, who did pioneer work in making the study of English literature popular in private classes, secondary schools, and colleges. He was able to do this by virtue of his unbounded enthusiasm in his work, his belief that literature properly taught would awaken a living interest in all that belongs to humanity, and his wealth of experience in life. His ambition to do this for English literature was not free from disturbing fears that the methods which were so much in vogue in teaching the Greek and Latin



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classics would be thought available here, and as a protest against such methods he wrote the following essays, which were published in the editions of his School Shakespeare.

In the revision of Hudson's edition of Shakespeare's plays now being published, it was desirable to retain those features of the work which gave it distinction and placed the editor among the great interpreters of dramatic literature, and to gather the essays on the teaching of Shakespeare and the English classics in a separate volume for the use of teachers as an introduction to Professor Hudson's life, his methods of teaching, and his principles of literary criticism. These essays contain earnest matter for the teacher of English, and if they are read as they were intended to be read they will reveal what is so much needed at the present time, — a deep feeling for literature, its natural magic and moral profundity, rather than a critical knowledge of it.

The Introduction gives such biographical facts as had a special influence on the development of Hudson's character and the forming of his tastes; and the Notes show how his work is related to that of other great teachers, and reflect the esteem in which it was held by his coworkers in the sphere of Shakespearean interpretation and criticism. It is believed these will be found helpful to those teachers who would teach literature in a vital way.

It was my good fortune to come upon these essays at a time, during my first year of teaching, when I was casting about for editions of the English classics which were edited with an idea of revealing the forces in the life of the times which gave them their tone and color, and the personality behind them which gave them their charm and vogue, rather than those affording opportunity for learned disquisitions on the structure of language and the science of

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verse — the kind of criticism adapted to make our pleasure less. I found in them a living power, a warm human sympathy, a clear moral purpose, and a noble conception of what constitutes literary workmanship — the unmistakable signs of one who possessed the eye to see, the heart to feel, and the imagination to make real the things in literary art which are more excellent. After reading them I sought the man who created them, and the resulting intimate association which I had with him during the remaining years of his life was rich in revelation of

> a Soul whose master bias leans
> To home-felt pleasures and to gentle scenes.

He was a genial spirit, full of delicate and subtle purposes, of sweet and chivalrous activities, of healthful and charming enthusiasms, of a high faith in the beauty and truth of noble literary creations, and yet

> endued as with a sense
> And faculty for storm and turbulence,

which manifested itself in a fierce denunciation of pedantry and a withering scorn of drudgery — those foes to the study of mere literature — which, when once admitted to the class room, will expel interest, admiration, and fellowship.

For these reasons it has been a pleasure to prepare this volume, and to introduce my friend and teacher to others who can never feel the charm of his presence as I have felt it.

Owing to the nature of these essays and the conditions under which they were written, it was but natural that there should be some repetition of thought and form, but it has seemed best to republish them as they originally appeared.

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The address on Daniel Webster is included in this volume as being worthy of study beside those later tributes of Honorable S. W. McCall and Honorable George F. Hoar, given at the Webster Centennial at Dartmouth College.

My thanks are due to Dr. Horace Howard Furness for permission to quote from his correspondence with Dr. Hudson, and to Professor Edward Dowden, of Trinity College, Dublin, for his interesting present-day estimate of Dr. Hudson's work, which appears in the Notes.

The presence of a cross (+) in the text indicates that there is a note on the passage.

A. J. GEORGE

BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS
August, 1906

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# INTRODUCTION

Henry Norman Hudson was born in Cornwall, Vermont, January 28, 1814. His early years were spent on the farm, where he was brought up to know the necessity and the value of application. The only advantages which he had for an education were such as were common in a New England town with its system of district schools. But these advantages should not be underrated, for though the soil was not rich in arts and letters, yet by the discipline of simplicity in habit, truth in speech, and knowledge rightly honored by being associated with power to do something worthy, the youth was being unconsciously nurtured into possibilities of future usefulness. Much of his power to appreciate and interpret Wordsworth was gained in these rural associations, breathing the keen and wholesome air of poverty.

When eighteen years of age young Hudson left the farm and became apprenticed to a coach maker. During the three years spent in learning his trade he was working extra hours to earn additional wages with which to buy books. How mature his mind had become under the simple and natural training of the time — and especially of the district school where he came upon bits of the great poets and prose writers in the old reading book — is seen from the fact that the first books which he bought were Shakespeare, Milton, Plutarch's *Lives*, and Butler's *Analogy*. It was fortunate for him, as he often remarked to me, that at this time he lived in the



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family of his master in the trade, a man full of sympathy, of shrewd observation, and sound sense. The master soon saw that his apprentice was spending his time in reading to some purpose, for he talked intelligently and gracefully upon the subjects in life and letters which interested him; he therefore suggested to him the possibility of preparing for college. The suggestion somewhat surprised the lad, but it pleased him no less, and he at once set about the task of getting ready for the examinations. This he had to do for himself, working late and early at his tasks, for he could get no aid save occasional advice from the local clergyman; and yet in 1836 he entered Middlebury College, where his older brother was then a student, determined that he would work his way to the end.

It was during this period that the main elements of his character as revealed later in life received their proper bent. He had little time for the usual college festivities, as he was older than the average student and had learned the value of time. He was somewhat shy and reserved; he lived much by himself, with nature and with books. The libraries attracted him more than the playground. He was studious in much the same way that Emerson was, — a way that did not show immediate returns, and so failed of reward based upon the usual college tests; consequently he was left unnoticed and in obscurity by the college faculty and most of the students. His tastes were literary and forensic. He was skilled in the art of reading and talking, and whenever he found students of kindred mind he was free and friendly in conversation, and courageous in presenting his convictions. When speaking of or writing on his favorite authors he was animated and zealous, full of poetic fervor and originality. His essays, especially those on Shakespeare,

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were no mere reproductions of facts or the thoughts of others, but were characterized by clear insight, keen analysis, sound judgment, and fervid feeling, enlivened by a quiet and quaint humor. They were free from the spirit of judicial criticism, for he insisted that loving sympathy was the secret of insight. It was this sympathy, this power of making the author's ideas and feelings his own, that won for him the fit audience in that rural college. Reverend H. L. Sheldon, a college mate of his, writes: "At one time when Hudson seemed even more than usually earnest and happy in his comments, I remarked to him: 'Hudson, you will some day write a book on Shakespeare; I will give you a title, — The Beauties of the World's Greatest Poet.' He replied, 'Oh, no; I read and study this author only because of the genuine pleasure it affords me and the kind of rest it gives me from the fatigue and routine of my college application.'" Here was the substance of his great work as an æsthetic critic, and the fundamental principle in all his teaching of the English classics. From this early recognition of the purpose and the power of great literature he became a bitter enemy of pedantry on the one hand, and of drudgery on the other, which have been so often associated with literary studies, and have done so much to prevent their proper recognition in academic education.

On graduating from college in 1840 he went to Kentucky, where he began teaching. The next two years he taught in Huntsville, Alabama. He continued his Shakespeare studies meanwhile, and gathered material for a series of lectures which he gave to large and enthusiastic audiences in the principal southern cities. These lectures revealed such a wealth of ideas, originality of interpretation, ripeness of thought, vigor and mastery of language that

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their fame traveled northward, and in 1844 he came to Boston and began that work which made him a marked literary figure there for nearly half a century. Through his lectures on Shakespeare he became a center of peculiar interest in Boston. He was received with enthusiasm by men as wide apart as Richard H. Dana and Theodore Parker. Mr. Emerson, who was then lecturing upon literary and philosophical subjects up and down the land, was charmed with the personality of the new critic. Mr. George Ticknor was enthusiastic in his admiration for the spirit of the young and chivalrous expounder of the great poet. Hudson soon became as popular as Emerson himself in lecture courses in all the great cities. Mr. Horace Howard Furness writes me, "I vividly remember the enthusiasm which attended his early course of lectures in Philadelphia and the unexampled crowds which attended them." In 1848 he published his lectures with a preface and dedication to Mr. Richard H. Dana. These studies of types of human nature as illustrated in Shakespeare's various characters had a glow and warmth, a freshness of imaginative conception, and a clearness of critical insight superior to that attained by any American writer, and placed their author in the front rank of interpreters. So popular were they that a second edition was called for in less than a year. Dr. Bartol, in reviewing them for the *North American Review*, said: "Never was a heartier, more absorbing admiration shown than Mr. Hudson's for his subject. After long-continued meditation and much rewriting these lectures are now presented to us like 'beaten oil,' pure and rich."

It was but natural that such studies of Shakespeare should lead to a desire to prepare an edition of his works for the purpose of initiating the general reader into

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a study of the dramatist with a new and more humanistic spirit. In 1851 he brought out an edition of Shakespeare's plays in eleven volumes. This is sometimes called the first American edition because of the enthusiasm it created among readers. Although Mr. G. C. Verplanck had brought out an edition in 1847, it soon became rare because of the destruction of the plates by fire, and Mr. Hudson's edition had the control of the market until Mr. Richard Grant White became his rival. This work owed its reputation and success mainly to the character of the critical introductions to the plays in which were found the same unique and admirable interpretations of the characters which had been the feature of his lectures. It was at once evident that Hudson was a pupil of Coleridge, whose criticism was a criticism of love. Coleridge combined the impulse of admiration with the ability to explain why he admired; he criticised poetry as poetry, not as science.

In 1852 Hudson married Miss Emily S. Bright, a gifted and cultured lady, whose love was in her home and the things which make home lovely. She became his wisest and most sympathetic critic. In 1859 he was admitted to the diaconate of the Episcopal Church. He was for several years editor of the *Churchman* and originated the *Church Monthly*. In 1862, while in his parochial charge in Litchfield, Connecticut, he became chaplain of the New York Volunteer Engineers and war correspondent of the New York *Evening Post*. Being stationed in the department commanded by General B. F. Butler, he wrote a private letter to Mr. Godwin in regard to the general's defeat near Bermuda Hundred. This was used as a part of an editorial in the *Evening Post*. Soon after this Chaplain Hudson got leave of absence to visit his son who was lying at the point

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of death. After the death of the son Mrs. Hudson was so broken down with grief that the chaplain sent his resignation to his colonel. It was accepted and forwarded to General Butler, who saw his chance to get even with Hudson, and he ordered him to appear at headquarters on the charge of being absent without leave. He was then put into the prison, or "bull pen," as it was called, where he suffered all kinds of indignities and hardships during a period of several months, until his friends at Washington became informed of the condition of things, when he was released by wish of President Lincoln, and immediately General Grant gave him leave of absence. Later Mr. Hudson took occasion to review the case, and in a pamphlet of sixty pages arraigned the motive and method of General Butler in the most scathing and brilliant repartee since Burke's "Letter to a Noble Lord." At the time General Butler was seeking the governorship of Massachusetts Mr. Hudson reprinted the pamphlet as a political document. On this occasion Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote to him: "Your pamphlet is timely; it seems to me that the impending election is to mark the choice of Massachusetts between civilization and semibarbarism. I am very glad you have retold your story at a time when it will serve as a strong count in his indictment."

In 1865 Mr. Hudson moved to Cambridge, where he spent the remainder of his life. He occasionally officiated in churches, but his time was given almost entirely to teaching Shakespeare and other English authors and to lecturing. When Grant White's last edition of Shakespeare came out Mr. Hudson confessed that it had beaten his, but at the time he said, "Wait awhile, and I will beat White as much as he has now beaten me." His teaching in the school and college led him to urge that Shakespeare be made of more use

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in English courses, and he began to prepare the plays for such use. The feature of these plays was those remarkable introductions dealing with the characters in their relation to human life and to Shakespeare's mind and art.

In 1872 he published his *magnum opus*, Shakespeare's *Life, Art, and Characters*, in two volumes, which is the greatest work in the sphere of æsthetic criticism yet produced in this country, and is the equal of the best by English and German scholars. The concluding act of his literary life was the *Harvard Shakespeare*, in twenty volumes, published in 1880. This edition, new in the treatment of text, in the introductory matter and notes, at once took its place among the best and most reliable of those intended for the general reader.

After the completion of the Harvard edition he continued teaching regularly at St. Paul's School, Concord, New Hampshire, at St. Mark's, Southboro, and in the Boston University School of Oratory, where he was a great favorite, owing to his kindling intellectual power, quaint humor, and genial manner. One of the masters at St. Paul's writes of him: "The ideal of a well-balanced man was so consistently applied by Dr. Hudson, whether to an author's work or to a boy's education, that he saw indeed how excellent nature's provisions are and how good man's will may make his destiny. These aims and standards come back again and again to us with real force as we recall his noble, manly, and eloquent words. He was poet, critic, philosopher, and preacher all in one,

non sorditus auctor
Naturæ verique;

and his wisdom was enforced by the loving example of his own genuine goodness."

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Next to Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Burke, and Webster were the authors he most delighted to expound. His *Studies in Wordsworth* was a work in every way worthy of him and the poet whom he loved. His admiration for Webster was unbounded, and the quality of all he had written and spoken on him was so true and noble that his distinguished classmate, the Honorable E. J. Phelps, president of the Webster Historical Society, asked him to prepare a life of the great statesman. In February, 1882, Mr. Phelps wrote: "Do not forget that I have appointed you to write that grand life, and shall help you to all constitutional and legal material I know of."

He had thought long and deeply about Webster, his life and times, and had gathered the material which he was to incorporate into the biography; he was waiting only until the whole subject should be luminous to his thought when the disease appeared which caused his death. He had not even put pen to paper on this work. His death was sudden and unexpected, as he had been in his usual health and vigor until his last public appearance in a lecture on *Cymbeline* at Wellesley College. He was much fatigued by the effort; soon glandular swelling appeared in the neck, which gave his physicians some fear that an operation would be necessary. During the week following I saw him daily, and the only apparent change was declining strength; that whereas he had been willing to talk (as I was more than willing to listen) now he would say: "You must do the talking. I must listen. Tell me of your work." He was as much interested as ever in any question concerning education, — especially the teaching of English, — so that while I had some anxiety as to his condition, I did not think that he was seriously ill. When I left him on the evening before

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the operation there was nothing in his manner to indicate that he was apprehensive of the result. The following letter written to his publisher only a few days before his death reveals the nature of the man, and shows how careful he was not to alarm his friends: "I am no better nor, so far as I can judge, am I any worse than when you called. The principal change is a constant failure of strength. To-morrow (Saturday) at twelve o'clock they will perform a very serious operation on me. What the result may be is, of course, all in the dark. If my hour has come, so be it. Give my cordial regards to all the dear girls and boys in the house, and ask them to give me their good wishes and prayers in this hour of trial. God help me! and God help us all!" The shock of the operation was too great for his weakened system, and he died on January 16, 1886.

Mr. Hudson was a man of marked peculiarities, physical and mental. He has often been compared to Carlyle in the contour of his head and face. The following comparison was written by Reverend Julius Ward in 1880: "He has the same perceptive assaulting brow, the same eager restless eyes, the same personality in speech, the same impetuous utterance, the same intensity of feeling upon great questions, the same glowing passion when aroused, the same spiritual insight as has Carlyle. He was Carlyle on the lecture platform as truly as Carlyle in conversation. His recent lectures in Hawthorne Hall were rare displays of totally unique powers of public speaking, of a way of saying unforgettable things in an unforgettable style, of throwing great force into single sentences, of speaking the truth so that no one can gainsay it. Whenever he has spoken, by word or pen, he has unconsciously spoken or written with the same impetuosity, the same audacity, the same insight which

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mark the utterances of the venerable Chelsea sage." He was a man of might when paying a tribute to noble men and worthy causes, of large and liberal spirit; his mental and moral fiber was stanch and true, and hence he was a delightful friend and implacable enemy. He was brilliant in conversation, quick in repartee, pungent in satire, of delicate irony, of shy and gentle humor, merry within the limits of becoming mirth. He was at his best in the privacy of his library when a few friends were present: then the soft blue eyes would kindle with appreciation, or flash with indignation, the features would light up, the lips quiver, and his utterance would assume forms lucid, graceful, witty, pathetic, and imaginative by turns. He became 'the old man eloquent,' stimulating in wit, wholesome in knowledge, full of the genial sap of humanity. No one who enjoyed these familiar expositions, of mellow eloquence, of large and noble discourse full of the sweets of poetry and the wisdom of philosophy, will ever forget them or the charming personality from whom they emanated.

Of the many tributes of friends, that of Honorable E. J. Phelps, written from the legation of the United States, London, January 30, 1886, is perhaps the most fitting: "Student, Scholar, Gentleman, Christian, happy in his family, his friendships, his distinguished reputation, his well-earned success: not many reach the limit of three-score and ten with so much to be thankful for, so little to deplore."

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# ESSAYS ON

# ENGLISH STUDIES

PREFACE TO SCHOOL HAMLET

ENGLISH IN SCHOOLS

SHAKESPEARE AS A TEXT-BOOK

HOW TO USE SHAKESPEARE IN SCHOOL

PREFACE TO THE HARVARD EDITION OF SHAKESPEARE

DANIEL WEBSTER

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# PREFACE TO SCHOOL HAMLET

Since the first volume of my *School Shakespeare* made its appearance, which was about nine years ago, very considerable advances have been made in the way of furniture and preparation needful or desirable for such a work. This is especially the case with the play here presented in a new dress. And my own long and constant occupation in teaching classes in Shakespeare has, I would fain hope, now brought me a somewhat larger and riper fitness for doing what is requisite in this particular field. Moreover, the stereotype plates of this play, as also of some others, have been so much and so often used for the pamphlet sections of the volume, that they have become not a little worn and defaced. These are the principal reasons for setting forth the present edition.

I still adhere to my old plan of footnotes,+ instead of massing the annotation all together at the end of the play. This is because ample experience has assured me, beyond all peradventure, that whatever of explanation young students need of Shakespeare's text — and they certainly need a good deal — is much better every way when placed directly under the eye, so that they can hardly miss it; and because at least nineteen in twenty of such pupils will pass over an obscure word or phrase without understanding it, rather than stay to look up the explanation in another part of the volume. In this instance, however, I have meant to exclude from the footnotes all matter but what appeared fairly needful



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or useful for a proper understanding of the Poet's language and meaning. As will readily be seen from some of the footnotes, I am indebted to Mr. Joseph Crosby, of Zanesville, Ohio, for most valuable aid towards this part of my task. The matter so used has been communicated to me in a private correspondence with that gentleman, running through several years, and extending over the whole field of Shakespeare, and throwing more light on dark and difficult passages than I have received from any other living commentator on the Poet.

Another advantage of the method of footnotes is, that it operates as a wholesome restraint against overdoing the work of annotation. And surely, if we may judge from what has been done, it is so much easier to multiply superfluous notes than to keep within the bounds of what is fairly needful in this kind, that some such restraint seems eminently desirable. Shakespeare, it scarce need be said, has suffered a great deal from this sort of exegetical incontinence. And perhaps the tendency is stronger now than ever before to smother his workmanship beneath a mass of needless and even obstructive annotation.[+] An inordinate fecundity of explanation is quite too much the order of the day. There have been divers instances, of late, where we find the gloss, I cannot say outweighing, but certainly far outbulking, the text. Surely it is better to leave students a little unhelped than thus to encumber them with superfluous help. These burdens of unnecessary comment are really a "weariness of the flesh"; and even hungry minds may well be repelled from a feast so overlaid with quenchers of the appetite. Nor have the Poet's editors yet got their minds untied from the old vice of leaving many of his darkest things unexplained, and of explaining a multitude of things that were better left to

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take care of themselves. For pupils ought not to be put to studying Shakespeare at all, until they have grown to such a measure of intelligence, that they may be safely presumed to know several things without being told.

Such being the case, or at least my view of the case, I am not without apprehension, that some excess may be justly charged upon what is here done. Self-restrained and sparing as I have meant to be, still there is a considerable addition to the number of notes given in my former edition. But, in the matter of annotation, it is not easy to strike just the right medium between too much and too little. Here, again, I have been mainly guided by the results of my own experience in teaching; aiming to give such and so many notes as I have found needful or conducive to a fair understanding of the Poet's thought.

In the present stage of Shakespearean study, I suppose it would hardly do, even in a book designed for school use, to leave the matter of textual comment and textual correction altogether untouched. Accordingly there will be found, at the end of the play, a body of Critical Notes,+ wherein I have drawn together whatever seemed necessary or desirable to be said in the way of textual criticism, and of comment on such particulars of textual correction as are here admitted. In doing this, I have almost unavoidably been led to note a few instances of different readings.

These few cases excepted, I have purposely, and with full deliberation, abstained from everything in the line of variorum comment and citation. For, indeed, such matter, however right and good in its place, can hardly be of any use or interest save to those who are making or intending to make a specialty of Shakespearean lore. But, of the pupils and even the teachers in our schools and colleges, probably

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not one in five hundred has, or ought to have, any thought of becoming a specialist in Shakespeare, or a linguistic antiquary in any department of study. To such students, a minute discussion or presentation of various readings must needs be a stark impertinence; and its effect, if it have any, can hardly be other than to confuse and perplex their thoughts. In this, as in other walks of human service, the processes of elaborate study are of very limited use, and may well be confined to a few; while the last results of such study are or may be highly useful to all. I hold, indeed, that Shakespeare ought to be made much more of than he is in our higher education: + not, however, with the view of fitting people to be editors and critics; but that they may have their minds and hearts rightly attuned to the delectations of his poetry and eloquence and wisdom; and that they may carry from the study some fair preparation of liberal thought and culture and taste into the common pursuits and interests of life. The world is getting prodigiously overstocked with authors; + so many are aspiring to gain a living by their wits, that the thing is becoming a dreadful nuisance: and it really seems full time that we should begin to take more thought how a condition of "plain living" may be sanctified with the grace of "high thinking"; and how even the humbler and more drudging forms of labor may be sweetened by the pure and ennobling felicities of unambitious intelligence.

A question has lately been raised, and is still pending, as to the comparative value of verbal and of what is called æsthetic criticism; and some have spoken disparagingly, not to say contemptuously, of the latter, as a mere irrelevancy, which they would fain be rid of altogether. Verbal criticism certainly has its place, and in its place is not to be

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dispensed with; and it has at least this advantage over the other, that it is strictly necessary in the study of such authors as Shakespeare, who abounds in words and phrases which, to common readers, are quite unintelligible without such help. This, however, may easily be overdone, and in fact sometimes has been hugely overdone, insomuch as to become little better than a sheer encumbrance; nevertheless, on the whole, it has been of incalculable service. But the other, I must think, has done good service too, and has fairly justified its claims to a high estimate in Shakespearean lore: albeit I have to confess that some discredit has of late come upon it, from the fact that, in divers cases, it has taken to very odd and eccentric courses, and has displayed an ill-starred propensity to speculate and subtilize the Poet's workmanship clean out of its natural propriety. Transcendental metaphysics, whether applied to science, to philosophy, to art, or to whatsoever else, of course loves to "reason high, and finds no end, in wandering mazes lost." Whatever it takes in hand, it can easily discover any meaning it wants, and as easily argue away any meaning not in accordance with its idealistic predilections; so using its alchemy as to "extract sunbeams from cucumbers," or to resolve gold into vapor, just as it happens to list. But these abuses may very well be struck off without casting away the thing itself. And the æsthetic criticism of Coleridge, Schlegel, Charles Lamb, Hazlitt, and Mrs. Jameson, has probably done more to diffuse and promote the study of Shakespeare, than all the verbal criticism in the world put together.+

The *Introduction* here given, as also some of the footnotes, is mainly occupied with matter in this line; the aim being, to aid such students as may care to be aided, towards what may be termed the *interior* study of Shakespeare's

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characters. Ordinarily, in books designed for such use as the present, I deem it better to reproduce extracts from approved masters in critical discourse than to obtrude any judgments of my own. But my views of Hamlet are so different from those commonly put forth, that in this case I judged it best to set them aside, and to occupy the limited space at my disposal with a presentation of my own thoughts. In this part of the work, I have derived much furtherance from Professor Karl Werder's able essay on Hamlet, portions of which, very choicely translated, are given in Mr. H. H. Furness's great and admirable work, the variorum edition of the play. My own views were indeed substantially the same long before I had any knowledge of the German Professor, and even before his essay was written; but I would not if I could, and certainly could not if I would, disguise that I am indebted to him for much aid, and more encouragement, towards a full statement and expression of them.

The occasion moves me to protest, with all possible earnestness, against the course now too commonly pursued in our studying and teaching of English literature. We seem indeed to have got stuck fast in the strange notion, that children are never learning anything unless they are *conscious* of it: [+] and so we are sparing no pains to force in them a premature and most unhealthy consciousness of learning. Nothing is left to the free and spontaneous vitalities of Nature. Things have come to such a pass with us, that a pupil must live,

> Knowing that he grows wiser every day,
> Or else not live at all, and seeing too
> Each little drop of wisdom as it falls
> Into the dimpling cistern of his heart.

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Hence our education is kept at a restless fever heat of ambition and emulation; and this naturally involves an incessant urging of high-pressure methods. We have no faith in any sowing, save where the seeds "forthwith spring up, because they have no deepness of earth." So eager and impatient are we for immediate results, that the conditions and processes of inward growth are, as far as possible, worked off and got rid of. But the results attained by this straining and forcing are necessarily false and delusive; and presently wither away, because they have no root.

Thus in our hot haste to make the young precociously intellectual, we are just burning real health and vigor of intelligence out of them;+ or, at all events, the best that can be gained by such a course is but what Wordsworth justly deprecates as "knowledge purchased with the loss of power." For, in truth, when people, of whatever age, see themselves growing from day to day, they are not really growing at all, but merely bloating; — a puffing up, not a building up. And we shall assuredly find, in due time, nay, we are already finding, that those who get ripe before they are out of their teens begin to rot before passing their twenties. For such a forced and premature action of the mind can only proceed by overtaxing and exhausting other parts of the system; and must needs be followed by a collapse of the mind itself equally premature. In other words, where the brain is built up at the expense of the stomach, the brain itself must soon break down. And, as "the child is father of the man," so of course the smart boys of our educational hotbeds can only blossom out into grown-up intellectual manikins.

Now, in opposition to all this, be it said, again and again, that the work of education is necessarily secret and

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unconscious just in proportion as it is deep and generative. For the mind is naturally conscious only of what touches its surface, rustles in its fringes, or roars in its outskirts; while that which works at its vital springs, and feeds its native vigor, is as silent as the growing of the grass, as unconscious as the assimilation of the food and the vitalizing of the blood. When its springs of life are touched to their finest issues, then it is that we are least sensible of the process. So it is rightly said, "the gods approve the depth and not the tumult of the soul." Only the dyspeptic are conscious of their gastric operations: the eupeptic never think of their stomachs, are not even aware that they have any.

One would suppose that a little reflection on the workings of the infant mind might teach us all this.+ For children, during their first five years, before they can tell anything about it, or make any show of it in set recitations, and while they are utterly unconscious of it, do a vast amount of studying and learning; probably storing up more of real intelligence than from any subsequent ten years of formal schooling. And such schooling is no doubt best and wisest when it continues and copies, as far as may be, those instinctive methods of Nature. But the pity of it is, that our education, as if "sick of self-love," appears to spurn the old wisdom of Nature, preferring to take its rules and measures from a proud and arrogant intellectualism.

In the mental and moral world, as in the physical, the best planting is always slow of fruitage: generally speaking, the longer the fruit is in coming, the sounder and sweeter when it comes; an interval of several years, perhaps of ten, or even twenty, being little time enough for its full and perfect advent. For growth is a thing that cannot be extemporized; and, if you go about to extemporize it, you will be

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sure to cheat or be cheated with a worthless surface imitation: that is to say, in place of a growth, which is slow and silent, but full of juice and taste withal, will be substituted a swift, loud, vapid manufacture.

What a teacher, therefore, most especially needs (and parents need it too) is the faith that knows how to work and wait; — to work diligently, carefully, earnestly; to wait calmly, patiently, hopefully; + — that faith which, having its eye on the far-off future, does not thirst for present rewards,

> Nor with impatience from the season ask
> More than its timely produce.

For Nature, the honest old Mother, is far better, stronger, richer, than our busy and meddlesome intellectualists, who are straining so hard to get ahead of her, have the heart to conceive. Human wisdom may indeed aid and further her processes; but it is stark folly to think of superseding them. And the forcing system now so much in vogue is essentially a leveling system; though, to be sure, it can only level downwards: perhaps, indeed, the circumstance of its looking to a compelled equality is what makes it so popular; — a thing sure to issue in a manifold spuriousness! For its estimate of things is, for the most part, literally preposterous. Minds of a light and superficial cast it overstimulates into a morbid quickness and volubility, wherein a certain liveliness and fluency of memory, going by rote, parrot-like, enables them to win flashy and vainglorious triumphs by a sort of cheap and ineffectual phosphorescence; thus making them, as Professor Huxley says, "conceited all the forenoon of their life, and stupid all its afternoon": while, upon minds of a more robust and solid make, which are growing too much inwardly to do any shining outwardly, it has a

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disheartening and depressing effect. Thus the system operates to quench the deeper natures, while kindling false fires in the shallower.

Hence, no doubt, the feeling, which can hardly be new to any thoughtful teacher or parent, that "strongest minds are often those of whom the noisy *school* hears least." + For, under the system in question, modest vigor is naturally eclipsed by pert and forward imbecility, — the proper characteristic of minds that have not strength enough to keep still. But minds thus heated into untimely efflorescence can hardly ripen into anything but sterility and barrenness: before the season of fruitage, the sap is all dried out of them. To quote Professor Huxley again: "The vigor and freshness, which should have been stored up for the hard struggle for existence in practical life, have been washed out of them by precocious mental debauchery, — by book-gluttony and lesson-bibbing: their faculties are worn out by the strain upon their callow brains, and they are demoralized by worthless, childish triumphs before the real work of life begins." Of those who are so incessantly driving on this bad system, we may well ask, with Wordsworth, —

> When will their presumption learn,
> That in th' unreasoning progress of the world
> A wiser spirit is at work for us,
> A better eye than theirs, most prodigal
> Of blessings, and most studious of our good,
> Even in what seem our most unfruitful hours?

Now, Shakespeare, above all other authors, should be allowed to teach as Nature teaches, else he ought not to be used as a text-book at all. And here, I suspect, the great danger is, that teachers, having too little faith in the spontaneous powers of Nature, will undertake to do too

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much, will keep thrusting themselves, their specialties and artificial preparations, between the pupil and the author. With average pupils, if of sufficient age, Shakespeare will make his way, slowly and silently indeed, but effectively, provided his proper efficacy be not strangled and defeated by an excess of learned verbalism. For his great superiority lies very much in this, that he writes close to facts as they are: no cloud of words, nothing, stands between his vision and the object. Hence with him, preëminently, language is used as a transparent, invisible vehicle of thought and matter; so that the mind, if rightly put in communication with him, thinks not of his expression at all, but loses sight of it, in the force and vividness of what is expressed. Beautiful his speech is indeed; but its beauty lies in this very thing, that it is the crystal shrine, itself unseen, of the speaking soul within. The less, therefore, the attention of students is diverted from his matter to his language by external calls, the quicker and stronger will be their interest in him; — an interest free, natural, and unconscious indeed, but all the better for that: so that the teacher will best further it by letting it alone; will most effectively help it by leaving it unhelped. For the learning of words is a noisy process; [+] whereas the virtue of things steals into the mind with noiseless step, and is ever working in us most when we perceive it least. And so, when Shakespeare is fairly studied in the manner here proposed, the pupil will naturally be drawn to forget himself; all thought of the show he is to make will be cheated into healthful sleep; unless, ay, unless —

> Some intermeddler still is on the watch
> To drive him back, and pound him, like a stray,
> Within the pinfold of his own conceit.

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Not, however, but that something of special heed should be given to the Poet's language, and his use of words; for many of these are either unfamiliar or used in unfamiliar senses: but this part of the study should be kept strictly subordinate to the understanding of his thought and meaning, and should be pushed no further than is fairly needful to that end. But I have ample cause for saying, that in many cases, if not in most, altogether too much time and strength are spent in mere word-mongering and lingual dissection; a vice as old indeed as Cicero's time, who pointedly ridicules it in describing one as "a chanter of formulas, a bird-catcher of syllables." In fact, as we are now chiefly intent on educating people into talkers, not workers, so the drift of our whole education is, to make language an ultimate object of study, instead of using it as a medium for converse with things: for we all know, or ought to know, that the readiest and longest talkers are commonly those who have little or nothing to say. On every side, teachers are to be found attending very disproportionately, not to say exclusively, to questions of grammar, etymology, rhetoric, and the mere technicalities of speech; thus sticking forever in the husk of language, instead of getting through into the kernel of matter and thought.

Now, as before implied, Shakespeare, least of all, ought to be taught or studied after this fashion. A constant dissecting of his words and syllables just chokes off all passage of his blood into the pupil's mind.[+] Our supreme master in the knowledge of human nature, it is little less than downright sacrilege to be thus using him as the raw material of philological exercitations. In the degree that it is important people should acquire a taste for him and learn to love him, just in that degree is it a sin to use him so; for such use

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can hardly fail to breed a distaste for him and an aversion to him. Doubtless there is a time for parsing, as there is for other things; but people cannot parse themselves or be parsed into a relish for Shakespeare's workmanship, or into a fruitful converse with his treasures of wisdom and power.

And with the young, especially, the study of vernacular authors should be prosecuted in entire subservience to the knowledge of things: if turned into a word-mongering process, it touches no free and natural springs of interest, and so becomes tedious and dull, — just the thing to defeat all that pleasure which is the pulse of mental life. For the proper business, as also the healthy instinct of young minds is, to accumulate and lay in stores of matter: the analytic and discriminative processes naturally belong to a later period; and to anticipate the proper time of them is a very bad mistake. But the knowledge of things proceeds too slowly and too silently for the ends of schoolroom show. Boys in school and college shine chiefly by the knowledge of words, for this is the mere work of memory; but, in practical life, men are useful and successful in proportion to their knowledge of things: which knowledge proceeds, to be sure, by the measures of *growth*, and therefore is far less available for competitive examinations and exhibitory purposes. And so, forsooth, our children must be continually drilled in a sort of microscopic verbalism, as if we had nothing so much at heart as to make them learned in words, ignorant of things. Hence, too, instead of learning how to *do* some one thing, or some few things, they must learn how to smatter of all things: instead, for example, of being taught to sing, they must be taught to prate scientifically about music.

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Thus our educational methods are all converging to the one sole purpose of generating a depurated and conceited intellectualism; which is just about the shallowest, barrenest, windiest thing in the whole compass of man's intellectual globe. But, what is strangest of all, so becharmed are we with our supposed progress in this matter, as not to see, what is nevertheless as plain as the Sun at midday, that we are taking just the right course to stunt and thwart the intellect itself. For the several parts of the mind must grow in proportion, keeping touch and time together in the unity of a common sap and circulation, else growth itself is but decay in disguise. And when the intellectual man, through pride of self-sufficingness, sequesters itself from its natural commerce and reciprocation with the moral, emotional, and imaginative man, the intellect must needs go into a dry rot.

I was convinced long ago, and further experience has but strengthened that conviction, that in the study of English authors the method of recitations is radically at fault, and ought seldom if ever to be used.+ For that method naturally invites, and indeed almost compels, the pupil to spend all his force on those points only which are, or may be made, available for immediate recitational effect. But, if the author be really worth studying, all, or nearly all, that is best in him escapes through the fingers of this process, and is left behind; the pupil having no occasion for attending to it, nor any strength of attention to spare for it. He does nothing but skip lightly over the surface of what is before him, picking up such small items as the tongue and memory can handle; but remaining quite innocent of all its deeper efficacies, which would indeed be rather an encumbrance than a help in reference to what he has in view. For the best thing that

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the best authors can do is to quicken and inspire the student's mind: but quickening and inspiration are nowise things to be recited; their natural effect is to prevent glibness of memory and tongue: and, while the pupil is intent only on what he can recite, the author's quickening and inspiring power has no chance to work; and he just runs or slides over it without being touched by it, or catching any virtue from it. It is just the difference of mere acquirement and culture: for what the mind gains in the way of acquirement merely, is lost almost as quickly as it is got; but whatever of culture is gained abides as an inseparable part of the mind itself. Thus the same rule holds here as in so many other things, that, when pupils are studying merely or mainly for effect, all the best effect of the study is inevitably missed.

For these reasons, I have never had and never will have anything but simple exercises;[+] the pupils reading the author under the teacher's direction, correction, and explanation; the teacher not even requiring, though usually advising, them to read over the matter in advance. Thus it is a joint communing of teacher and pupils with the author for the time being; just that, and nothing more. Nor, assuredly, can such communion, in so far as it is genial and free, be without substantial and lasting good; far better indeed than any possible cramming of mouth and memory for recitation. The one thing needful here is, that the pupils rightly understand and feel what they read: this secured, all the rest will take care of itself; because, when this is gained, the work is, not indeed done, but fairly and effectively begun; and what is once so begun will be ever after in course of doing, never done. For people cannot dwell, intelligently and with open minds,

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in the presence of "sweetness and light," or within the sound of wisdom and eloquence, without being enriched, — enriched secretly, it may be, but permanently; for the enrichment is in the shape of germs, which have in them the virtue of perennial growth. And when I find the pupils taking pleasure in what they are about, entering into it with the zest and spirit of honest delight, then I know full well that they are drinking in the author's soul power, and that what they are drinking in is going to the right spot. For, to find joy and sweetness in the taste of what is pure and good, is the strongest pledge that things are going well. And such a communing of youthful minds with genius and mellow wisdom has something of mystery and almost of magic in it. Rather say, it is a holy sacrament of the mind. As beautiful, too, as it is beneficent: in this naughty-lovely, or this lovely-naughty, world of ours, I hardly know of a lovelier sight. There is, be assured there is, regeneration in it.

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# ENGLISH IN SCHOOLS

Why should English Literature be taught in our schools? and, What is the best way of teaching it? These are the questions which I propose to discuss.

As preliminary to such discussion, it will, I think, be rightly in place to consider, briefly, what our people are aiming to prepare their children for, and what sort of an education it is the proper business of the school to give; that is to say, what form of mind and character, and what disposition of the faculties, it is meant to impress.

Now I take it that a vast majority of the pupils in our schools are not to pass their life as students or as authors. Their main business in this world is to gain an honest living for themselves and for those dependent on them. And no plan of education is just that leaves this prime consideration behind, in quest of any alleged higher aims: for there really are no higher aims; and all pretense of such is a delusion and a snare. Some men, it is true, do more than gain an honest living; but this is the *best* thing that any man does; as, on the other hand, shining intellectually is the poorest thing that any man does, or can possibly learn to do. Then too most of the pupils in our schools, ninety-nine hundredths of them at the least, are to get their living by handwork, not by headwork; [+] and what they need is, to have their heads so armed and furnished as to guard their handwork against error and loss, and to guide it to the most productive means and methods. And, for gaining



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an honest living by handwork, the largest and best part of their education is not to be had in school; it must be got somewhere else, or not at all. The right place, the only right place, for learning the trade of a farmer or a mechanic is on the farm or in the shop. For instance, Mr. Edward Burnett's "Deerfoot Farm," in Southborough, Massachusetts, is, I undertake to say, a better school for learning agriculture than any "agricultural college" is likely to be. There is no practicable, nay, no possible way of acquiring the use of tools but by actually handling them, and working with them. And this rule holds equally true in all the walks of life, — holds as true of the lawyer, the physician, the merchant, as of the shoemaker, the bricklayer, the machinist, the blacksmith.

On this point, our people generally, at least a very large portion of them, have their notions all wrong side up: their ideas and expectations in the matter are literally preposterous. How the thing came to be so, it were bootless to inquire; but so it clearly is. Parents, with us, are manifestly supposing that it is the business of the school to give their children all the education needful for gaining an honest living; that their boys and girls ought to come from the school-teachers' hands fully armed and equipped for engaging, intelligently and successfully, in all sorts of work, whether of head or of hand. And they are evermore complaining and finding fault because this is not done; that their children, after all, have only learned how to use books, if indeed they have learned that, and know no more how to use tools, are no better fitted to make or procure food and clothes, than if they had spent so much time in stark idleness or in sleep. But the fault is in themselves, not in the school; their expectations on this head being altogether

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unreasonable, and such as the school cannot possibly answer. That, say what you please, is the plain English of the matter; and it may as well be spoken.

I repeat that, with very few exceptions, and those mostly applicable to girls, the most and the best that the school can do, or can reasonably be expected to do, is to educate the mind and the heart; as for the education of their children's hands, parents must, yes, *must* look for this elsewhere: probably their best way is to take it into their own immediate care, and hold themselves religiously bound to attend to it. Possibly, withal, some parents, as also some who drive the trade of idealizing about education, may need to be taught, or warned, that unless the school have something ready made to its hand, unless the pupil bring to it something inside his skull, it cannot educate his mind: brains it cannot furnish; though it is often blamed for not doing this too. And, good as vocal intelligence may be, yet, for all practical ends, and even the dignities, of life, manual intelligence is vastly better; + this it is that makes both the artist and the artisan; and without this the former, however it may prattle and glitter, can neither plow the field nor reap the corn, neither tan the leather nor make the shoe, neither shape the brick nor build the wall, neither grind the flour nor bake the bread.

But I suspect our American parents have become somewhat absurdly, and not very innocently, ambitious of having their boys and girls all educated to be gentlemen and ladies; + which is, I take it, the same in effect as having them educated to be good for nothing; too proud or too lazy to live by handwork, while they are nowise qualified to live by headwork, nor could get any to do, if they were. And so they insist on having their children taught how to

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do something, perhaps several things, without ever soiling their fingers by actually doing anything. If they would, in all meekness and simplicity of heart, endeavor to educate their children to be good for something, they would be infinitely more likely to overtake the aim of their sinful and stupid ambition. The man who has been well and rightly educated to earn, and does earn, a fair living by true and solid service, he is a gentleman in the only sense in which it is not both a sin and a shame to be called by that title. Any form of honest service, however plain and humble, has manliness in it, and is therefore a higher style of gentility, and a sounder basis of self-respect, than any, even the proudest, form of mere social ornamentation. The dull boy, who cannot prate science, but can drive a cart as a cart ought to be driven, or the dull girl, who cannot finger a piano, but can rightly broil a beefsteak, is, in the eye of all true taste, a far more sightly and attractive object than the most learned and accomplished good-for-nothing in the world. I have seen men calling themselves doctors, who, week after week, month after month, year after year, were going about making sham calls on bogus patients, that so they might either get themselves a practice or make men believe they had got one; and have thought that the poorest drudge, who honestly ate his bread, or what little he could get, in the sweat of his face, was a prince in comparison with them. An aristocratic idler or trifler or spendthrift or clothes frame, however strong he may smell of the school and the college, of books and of lingual culture, is no better than a vulgar illiterate loafer; nor can his smart clothes and his perfumes and his lily hands and his fashionable airs shield him from the just contempt of thoughtful men and sensible women.

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Now, so long as people proceed upon the notion that their children's main business in this world is to shine, and not to work, and that the school has it in special charge to fit them out at all points for a self-supporting and reputable career in life; just so long they will continue to expect and demand of the school that which the school cannot give; to grumble and find fault because it fails to do what they wish; and to insist on having its methods changed till their preposterous demands are satisfied. On the other hand, the school could do its proper work much better, if people would but come down, or rather come up, to a just conception of what that work is. But it must needs fail, in a greater or less degree, to do that part of education which falls within its legitimate province, while struggling and beating about in a vain endeavor to combine this with that part which fairly lies outside of its province. For, in straining to hit the impossible, we are pretty sure to miss the possible. And all experienced teachers know right well that those parents who faithfully do their own part in the education of their children are most apt to be satisfied with what the school is doing.

It is, then, desirable that children should learn to think, but it is indispensable that they should learn to work; and I believe it is possible for a large, perhaps the larger, portion of them to be so educated as to find pleasure in both. But the great question is, how to render the desirable thing and the indispensable thing mutually helpful and supplementary. For, surely, the two parts of education, the education of the mind and the education of the hand, though quite distinct in idea, and separate in act, are not, or need not be, at all antagonistic.[+] On the contrary, the school can, and should, so do its part as to coöperate with and

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further that part which lies beyond its province. And it is both the office and the aim of a wise benevolence in teachers so to deal with the boys under their care as to make them, if possible, intelligent, thoughtful, sober-minded men, with hearts set and tuned to such services and such pleasures as reason and religion approve; also, to make them prudent, upright, patriotic citizens, with heads so stocked and tempered as not to be "cajoled and driven about in herds" by greedy, ambitious, unprincipled demagogues, and the political gamesters of the day. And here it is to be noted, withal, that any man who gains an honest living for himself, whether lettered or unlettered, is a good citizen in the right sense of the term; and that human slugs and do-nothings, however book-learned they may be, are not good citizens.

As for the women, let it suffice that their rights and interests in this matter are coördinate with those of the men; just that, and no more. Their main business, also, is to get an honest living. And the education that unprepares them or leaves them unprepared for this is the height of folly and of wrong. And I hope the most of them are not going to turn students or authors by profession, nor to aim at eating their bread in the sweat of the brain. For things have already come to that pass with us, that any fool can write a book*: the great difficulty is in finding people who know enough and have strength enough not to attempt it.

And here let me say that the greatest institution in the world is the family;+ worth all the others put together, and the foundation of them all. So, again, the greatest art known among men is housekeeping, which is the life of the family. For what are we poor mortals good for, in head, heart, hand, or anything else, without healthy, eupeptic stomachs? and how are we to have such stomachs without good cooking?

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So that I reckon housekeeping to be just the last thing that any *lady* can afford to be ignorant of. The finest accomplishment too that woman was ever beautified with. This part of woman's education, also, is to be gained at home; it cannot be gained anywhere else. As for those young ladies who are above going into the kitchen, and learning this great art by actually working at it, my advice is, that they forthwith migrate to a world where the home and the family have no place, and where babies are not to be born and nursed.

Our girls in school, then, should, first of all, be fashioned for intelligent, thoughtful, sober-minded women; + with souls attempered and attuned to the honest and ennobling delectations of the fireside; their heads furnished and disposed to be prudent, skillful, dutiful wives and mothers and housekeepers; home-loving and home-staying; formed for steady loves, serene attachments, quiet virtues, and the whole flock of household pieties; all suited to the office of

> A creature not too bright or good
> For human nature's daily food.

The love of home, and the art of making home lovely, must be mainly acquired in the works and enjoyments of home; and the best thing that the school can do is to coöperate with the home to that end.

But the most important item in this account, and that which is the main subject of what I have to say, is yet to come.

We have reached a stage of civilization and general culture in which both the virtue and the happiness of people depend very much on their intellectual forming and furnishing. And as this holds true alike of both sexes, so both will

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be included alike in the scope of what I have in mind to speak further. Books, of one sort or another, are now, on every hand, a common resort for entertainment and pleasure, and are likely to become more and more so. Wealth has greatly accumulated; machinery has come to do a large part of our work; and all sorts of people have more or less of leisure on their hands. This leisure ought not to be spent in idleness, neither will it be.+ In the vacancy of their hands people's thoughts will needs be busy either for the better or for the worse: if their minds are not dressed for the abode of the Deity, they will be workshops of the Devil. And reading does in fact bear a large part in filling up such vacant time.

Now, the world is getting full of devils, very potent ones too, in the shape of foolish and bad books. And I am apt to think the foolish devils in that shape even worse than the wicked: for they only begin the work of evil somewhat further off, so as to come at it the more surely; and a slow creeping infection is more dangerous than a frank assault. Nothing so bad here as that which eludes or seduces the moral sentinels of the heart. I am not exactly a believer in the old doctrine of total depravity; but I fear it must be confessed that the greater number of people take much more readily to that which is false and bad than to that which is good and true. Certainly what intoxicates and lowers stands a better chance with them than what sobers and elevates. Virtue and wisdom are an uphill road, where they do not advance without some effort; folly and vice a downhill path, where it requires some effort not to advance. And this is quite as true in intellectual matters as in moral.+ Here, to most people, delight in what is false and bad comes spontaneously; delight in what is true and good is the slow

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result of discipline and care, and grows by postponement of impulse to law.

I suspect it has been taken for granted much too generally, that if people know how to read they will be apt enough to make good use of that knowledge without further concern.+ A very great mistake! This faculty is quite as liable to abuse as any other: probably there is none other more sadly abused at this very time; none that needs to be more carefully fenced about with the safeguards of judgment and taste. Through this faculty crowds of our young people are let into the society of such things as can only degrade and corrupt, and, to a great extent, are positively drawn away from the fellowship of such as would elevate and correct. Most, probably not less than seven eighths, of the books now read are simply a discipline of debasement; ministering fierce stimulants and provocatives to the lower propensities, and habituating the thoughts to the mud and slime of literary cesspools and slop-cooks.

I have indeed no faith in the policy or the efficacy of attempting to squelch these springs of evil by forcible sequestration, or to keep people from eating this poor devil-soup by muzzling them. If they will take to it, probably the best way is to let them have it; perhaps it is best to act somewhat on the plan of glutting them with it, in the hope that so they may outgrow it: but something might well be essayed so to fit and prepare them as that they may not take to it, and may even turn away from it with disgust when it comes to them. Surely, at all events, the education that delivers people over to such feeding is a very doubtful good.

In view of all which, it is clearly of the highest consequence, that from their early youth people should have their minds so bent and disposed as to find pleasure in such

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books as are adapted to purify and raise. I say *pleasure*, because we cannot rely, neither ought we, on arguments of right in this matter.+ Reading even good books without pleasure, and merely from a sense of duty, is of little benefit, and may even do hurt, by breeding insensibly an aversion to what is good, and by investing it with irksome associations. A genial delight in that which is good is what sets the colors of it in the mind: without this, the mind grows at odds with it. People cannot be droned or bored into virtue; and if evil were made as tedious to them as good often is, I suspect their hearts would soon be weaned from ugliness, and won to a marriage with beauty. And the pith of my argument is, that it is what people take pleasure in that really shapes and determines their characters. So experience has taught me that the characters of students in college are influenced far more by their reading than by their studies. From the books they take to you may judge at once whither their spirits are tending, and what they are inwardly made of, because here they generally go by free choice and pleasure. In brief, they study what they must; they read what they love; and their souls are and will be in the keeping of their loves. Even the breath of excellence is apt to be lost, if it be not waited on by delight; while, to love worthy objects, and in a worthy manner, is the top and crown of earthly good, ay, and of heavenly good also. Considering how clear and evident all this is, that so little is done, even in our highest seats of learning, to form the tastes and guide the reading of students, may well be matter of grief and astonishment. I have long wondered at it, and often sickened over it.

Now, to fence against the growing pestilence of foolish and bad books, I know of but one way; and that is by endeavoring systematically so to familiarize the young with

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the best and purest mental preparations, and so to prepossess them with the culture of that which is wholesome and good, that they may have an honest, hearty relish for it. The thing is, to plant the mind full of such loves, and so to set and form the intellectual tastes and habits, that the vicious and false will be spontaneously refused, and the healthy and true be freely preferred; + this too, not from any novelty in it, but for the experienced sweetness and beauty of it, and for the quiet joy that goes in company with it.

Let the efficacy of a very few good books be seasonably steeped into the mind, and then, in the matter of their reading, people will be apt to go right of their own accord; and assuredly they will never be got to go right except of their own accord. You may thus hope to predispose and attune the faculties of choice to what is noble and sweet, before the springs of choice are vitiated by evil or ignorant conversations. If people have their tastes set betimes to such authors as Spenser and Shakespeare, Addison, Scott, Wordsworth, and Charles Lamb, is it likely that they will stomach such foul stuff as the literary slums and grogshops of the day are teeming with? + I hope it is not so, and I will not readily believe it can be so. Nor can I see any impracticability, any insuperable difficulty here. Instances of native dullness or perversity there will indeed be, such as no soul music can penetrate: but that, as a general thing, young minds, yet undeflowered by the sensational flash and fury of vulgar bookmakers, will be found proof against the might and sweetness of that which is intellectually beautiful and good, provided they be held in communication with it long enough for its virtue to penetrate them, is what I will not, must not, believe, without a fairer trial than has yet been made.

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In reference to the foregoing points, a well-chosen and well-used course of study in the best English classics seems the most eligible and most effective preparation. Whether to the ends of practical use or of rational pleasure, this cannot but be the right line of early mental culture. The direct aids and inspirations of religion excepted, what better nursery can there be of just thoughts and healthy tastes? + what more apt to train and feed the mind for the common duties, interests, affections, and enjoyments of life? For the very process here stands in framing and disposing the mind for intercourse with the sayings of the wise, with the gathered treasures of light and joy, and with the meanings and beauties of Nature as seen by the eye, and interpreted by the pen, of genius and wisdom.

We are getting sadly estranged from right ideas as to the nature and scope of literary workmanship. For literature, in its proper character, is nowise a something standing outside of and apart from the practical service of life; a sort of moonshine world, where the working understanding sleeps for the idle fancy to dream. This is no doubt true in regard to most of the books now read; which are indeed no books, but mere devils and dunces in books' clothing; but it is not at all true of books that are books indeed. These draw right into the substance and pith of actual things; the matter of them is "labor'd and distill'd through all the needful uses of our lives"; the soul of their purpose is to arm and strengthen the head, and to inspire and direct the hand, for productive work. That an author brings us face to face with real men and things, and helps us to see them as they are; that he furnishes us with enablements for conversing rationally, and for wrestling effectively, with the problems of living, operative truth; that he

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ministers guidance and support for thinking nobly and working bravely in the services, through the perils, under the difficulties and adversities of our state, — this is the test and measure of his worth; this is the sole basis of his claim to rank as a classic.+ This, to be sure, is not always done directly, neither ought it to be; for the helps that touch our uses more or less indirectly often serve us best, because they call for and naturally prompt our own mental and moral coöperation in turning them to practical account.

It is such literature that the poet has in view when he tells us, —

> books, we know,
> Are a substantial world, both pure and good:
> Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
> Our pastime and our happiness will grow.
>
> And books are yours,
> Within whose silent chambers treasure lies
> Preserved from age to age; more precious far
> Than that accumulated store of gold
> And orient gems which, for a day of need,
> The Sultan hides deep in ancestral tombs:
> These hoards you can unlock at will.

Nor is it the least benefit of such authors that they reconcile and combine utility with pleasure, making each ministrative to the other;+ so that the grace of pleasant thoughts becomes the sweeter for their usefulness, and the virtue of working thoughts the more telling for their pleasantness; the two thus pulling and rejoicing together. For so the right order of mental action is where delight pays tribute to use, and use to delight; and there is no worse corruption of literature in the long run than where these are divorced, and made to pull in different lines. Such pleasure is itself uplifting, because it goes hand in hand with duty. And as

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life, with its inevitable wants and cares and toils, is apt to be hard enough at the best with most of us, there is need of all the assuagements and alleviations that can come from this harmonizing process. Pressed as we are with heavy laws, happy indeed is he

> Who from the wellspring of his own clear breast
> Can draw, and sing his griefs to rest.

Next to a good conscience and the aids of Christian faith, there is no stronger support under the burdens of our lot than the companionship of such refreshing and soul-lifting thoughts as spring up by the wayside of duty, from our being at home with the approved interpreters of Nature and Truth. This is indeed to carry with us in our working hours a power

> That beautifies the fairest shore,
> And mitigates the harshest clime.

Now I do not like to hear it said that our school education can do nothing towards this result. I believe, nay, I am sure, it can do much; though I have to admit that it has done and is doing far less than it might. I fear it may even be said that our course is rather operating as a hindrance than as a help in this respect. What sort of reading are our schools planting an appetite for? Are they really doing anything to instruct and form the mental taste, so that the pupils on leaving them may be safely left to choose their reading for themselves? It is clear in evidence that they are far from educating the young to take pleasure in what is intellectually noble and sweet. The statistics of our public libraries show that some cause is working mightily to prepare them only for delight in what is both morally and intellectually mean and foul.[+] It would not indeed be fair to charge our public

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schools with positively giving this preparation; but it is their business to forestall and prevent such a result. If, along with the faculty of reading, they cannot also impart some safeguards of taste and habit against such a result, will the system prove a success?

As things now go, English literature is postponed to almost everything else in our public schools: much as ever it can gain admission at all; and the most that can be got for it is merely such fag-ends of time as may possibly be spared from other studies. We think it a fine thing to have our children studying Demosthenes and Cicero; but do not mind having them left almost totally ignorant of Burke and Webster. Yet, in the matter of practical learning, ay, and of liberal learning too, for deep and comprehensive eloquence, for instruction in statesmanship, and in the principles of civil order and social well-being, Burke alone is worth more than all the oratory of Greece and Rome put together;+ albeit I am far from meaning to disrepute the latter. And a few of Webster's speeches, besides their treasure of noble English, — "a manly style fitted to manly ears," — have in them more that would come home to the business and bosoms of our best American intelligence, more that is suited to the ends of a well-instructed patriotism, than all that we have inherited from the lips of ancient orators.+

So, again, we spare no cost to have our children delving in the suburbs and outskirts of Homer and Virgil; for not one in fifty of them ever gets beyond these; yet we take no pains to have them living in the heart of Shakespeare and Wordsworth: while there is in Shakespeare a richer fund of "sweetness and light," more and better food for the intellectual soul, a larger provision of such thoughts as should dwell together with the spirit of a man, and be

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twisted about his heart forever, than in the collective poetry of the whole ancient heathen world.

It may indeed be said that these treasures are in a language already known, and so are accessible to people without any special preparation; and that the school is meant to furnish the keys to such wealth as would else be locked up from them. But our public schools leave the pupils without any taste for those native treasures, or any aptitude to enjoy them: the course there pursued does almost nothing to fit and dispose the pupils for communing with the wisdom and beauty enshrined in our mother tongue; while hardly any so master the Greek and Latin as to hold communion with the intellectual virtue which they enshrine. Few, very few, after all, can be trained to love Homer; while there are, I must think, comparatively few who cannot be trained to love Shakespeare;+ and the main thing is to plant that love. The point, then, is just here: Our schools are neither giving the pupils the key to the wisdom of Homer, nor disposing them to use the key to the wisdom of Shakespeare. And so the result is that, instead of bathing in the deep, clear streams of thought, ancient or modern, they have no taste but for waddling or wallowing in the shallow, turbid puddles of the time; —

> Best pleased with what is aptliest framed
> To enervate and defile.

It is a notorious fact that among our highly educated people, the graduates of our colleges, really good English scholars are extremely rare. I suspect it is not too much to say that among our instructors there are at least twenty competent to teach Greek and Latin, where there is one competent to teach English literature.+ Very few indeed of them are really at home in the great masters of our

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native tongue, so as to make them matter of fruitful exercise in the class room. They know not how to come at them, or to shape their course in teaching them. Their minds are so engrossed with the verbal part of learning, that, unless they have a husk of words to stick in, as in studying a foreign tongue, they can hardly find where to stick at all.

This habit, I suppose, comes mainly as a tradition from a former age; a habit which, though begun upon good causes, has been kept up long after those causes were done away. The prevailing ideas herein got fixed at a time when there was no well-formed English literature in being; when the language itself was raw and rude; and when the world's whole stock of intellectual wealth was enshrined in other tongues. The custom thus settled from necessity is continued to this day, when the English tongue, besides its own vast fund of original treasure, has had the blood of all the best human thought transfused into its veins, and when its walks have grown rich and delectable with the spoils of every earlier fruitage of genius and learning.

Three centuries ago Chaucer was the only really good English author; he was then two hundred years old; and the language had changed so much since his time that reading him was almost like studying a foreign tongue. So much was this the case, that Bacon thought the English was going to bankrupt all books intrusted to its keeping: he therefore took care to have most of his own works translated into Latin; and now our greatest regret touching him is, that we have not all those works in his own noble English. Before his time, the language changed more in fifty years than it has done in all the three hundred years since. This is no doubt because the mighty workmen of that age, himself among

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them, did so much to "bolt off change," by the vast treasures of thought and wisdom which they found or made the language capable of expressing. The work then so gloriously begun has been going on ever since, though not always with the same grand results; until now the English is commonly held to be one of the richest and noblest tongues ever spoken, and the English literature is, in compass and variety of intellectual wealth, unsurpassed by any in the world.

How strange it is, then, that, with such immense riches at hand in our vernacular, we should so much postpone them to the springs that were resorted to before those riches grew into being! + Because Homer and Sophocles had to be studied before Shakespeare wrote, why should Shakespeare still be ignored in our liberal education, when his mighty works have dwarfed Homer and Sophocles into infants? There might indeed be some reason in this, if he had been in any sort the offspring of those Greek masters: but he was blessedly ignorant of them; which may partly account for his having so much surpassed them. He did not conceive himself bound to think and write as they did; and this seems to have been one cause why he thought and wrote better than they did. I really can see no reason for insisting on learning from them rather than from him, except that learning from him is vastly easier.

Nevertheless I am far from thinking that the Greek and Latin ought to be disused or made little of in our course of *liberal* learning.+ On the contrary, I would, of the two, have them studied in college even more thoroughly than they commonly are; and this, not only because of their unequaled use in mental training and discipline, and as a preparation for solid merit and success in the learned professions, but also because a knowledge of them is so largely fundamental

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to a practical mastery of our own tongue. And here I am moved to note what seems to me a change for the worse within the last forty years. Forty years ago, besides that the Greek and Latin were made more of in college, at least relatively, than they are now, the students had both more time for English studies, and also more of judicious prompting and guidance in their reading. But, of late, there has been so much crowding in of modern languages and recent branches of science, that students have a good deal less time than formerly for cultivating English literature by themselves. In short, our colleges, it seems to me, did much more, forty years ago, towards setting and forming right literary and intellectual tastes than they are doing now. I believe they are now turning out fewer English scholars, and that these are not so well grounded and cultured in the riches of our native tongue. The fashion indeed has been growing upon us of educating the mouth much more than the mind; which seems to be one cause why we are having so many more talkers and writers than thinkers.+ An unappeasable itch of popularity is eating out the old love of solid learning, and the old relish for the haunts of the Muses.

It may have been observed, that in this argument I distinguish somewhat broadly between a liberal and a practical education. Our colleges ought to give, and, I suppose, aim at giving the former; while the latter is all that our public schools can justly be expected to give. And a large majority of the pupils, as I said before, are to gain their living by handwork, not by headwork. But then we want them made capable of solid profit and of honest delight in the conversation of books; for this, as things now are, is essential both to their moral health and also to their highest success in work; to say nothing of their duties and interests

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as citizens of a republican State. And, to this end, what can be more practical, in the just sense of the term, than planting and nursing in them right intellectual tastes, so that their reading shall take to such books as are really wholesome and improving?

On the general subject, however, I have to remark further, that our education, as it seems to me, is greatly overworking the study of language, especially in the modern languages. From the way our young people are hurried into French and German, one would suppose there were no English authors worth knowing, nor any thought in the English tongue worth learning. So we cram them with words, and educate them into ignorance of things, and then exult in their being able to "speak no sense in several languages." Surely a portion of the time might be as innocently spent in learning something worth speaking in plain mother English. When we add that, with all this wear and tear of brain, the pupils, ten to one, stick in the crust of words, and never get through into the marrow of thought, so as to be at home in it, our course can hardly be deemed the perfection of wisdom.

Our custom herein seems to involve some flagrant defect or error in our philosophy of education. The true process of education is to set and keep the mind in living intercourse with things: the works and ways of God in Nature are our true educators. And the right office of language is to serve as the medium of such intercourse. And so the secret of a good style in writing is, that words be used purely in their representative character, and not at all for their own sake.† This is well illustrated in Shakespeare, who in his earlier plays used language partly for its own sake; but in his later plays all traces of such use disappear: here he uses it purely in its representative character. This it is, in great

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part, that makes his style so much at once the delight and the despair of those who now undertake to write the English tongue. And in other writers excellence of style is measured by approximation to this standard. This it is that so highly distinguishes Webster's style, — the best yet written on this continent. His language is so transparent, that in reading him one seldom thinks of it, and can hardly see it. In fact, the proper character of his style is perfect, consummate manliness; in which quality I make bold to affirm that he has no superior in the whole range of English authorship. And in his *Autobiography* the great man touches the secret as to how this came about. "While in college," says he, "I delivered two or three occasional addresses, which were published. I trust they are forgotten: they were in very bad taste. I had not then learned that all true power in writing is in the idea, not in the style; an error into which the *Ars rhetorica*, as it is usually taught, may easily lead stronger heads than mine."

Hence it follows that language should be used and studied mainly in its representative character; that is, as a medium for conversing with things; and that studying it merely or even mainly for its own sake is a plain inversion of the right order. For words are of no use but as they bring us acquainted with the facts, objects, and relations of Nature in the world about us. The actual things and ideas which they stand for, or are the signs of, are what we ought to know and have commerce with. In our vernacular, words are, for the most part, naturally and unconsciously used in this way; except where a perverse system has got us into a habit of using them for their own sake; which is indeed the common bane of American authorship, making our style so intensely self-conscious, that an instructed taste soon tires

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of it. But, in studying a foreign tongue, the language itself is and has to be the *object* of thought. Probably not one in fifty of our college graduates learns to use the Greek and Latin freely as a medium of converse with things. Their whole mental force is spent on the words themselves; or, if they go beyond these to the things signified, it is to help their understanding of the words.

I freely admit that language, even our own, ought to be, to some extent, an object of study; but only to the end of perfecting our use and mastery of it as a medium. So that the true end of mental action is missed, where language is advanced into an ultimate object of study; which is practically making the end subordinate to the means. Here, however, I am anxious not to be misunderstood, and lest I may seem to strain the point too far; for I know full well that in such a cause nothing is to be gained by breaches of fairness and candor. It is a question of relative measure and proportion. And I mean that our education treats language quite too much as an object of thought, and quite too little as a medium. Our students, it seems to me, are altogether too much brought up in "the alms-basket of words"; and of too many of them it may not unfairly be said, "They have been at a great feast of languages, and stolen the scraps."

I have said that our custom in this matter stands partly as a tradition from a long-past age when there was no English literature in being. But this does not wholly explain it. The thing proceeds in great part from a perverse vanity of going abroad and sporting foreign gear, unmindful of the good that lies nearer home. Hence boys and girls, especially the latter, are hurried into studying foreign languages before they have learned to spell correctly or to read intelligibly in

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their own. I say girls especially, because, since the women set out to equal, perhaps to eclipse, the men in brain power, a mighty ambition has invaded them to be flourishing their lingual intellectuality in our faces. Besides, the fashion now is to educate young women for any place rather than for home. Most of them hope some time to spend six months traveling in Europe; and they think far more of preparing for that holiday than for all the working-day honors and services of life. And I fear it must be said withal, that we are the most apish people on the planet. I wish we may not prove "the *servum pecus* of a Gallic breed." Be that as it may, parents among us apparently hold it a much grander thing to have their children chopping Racine and Voltaire than conversing with the treasures of wisdom and beauty in our own tongue; as if smattering French words were better than understanding English and American things.

Thus our school education is growing to be very much a positive dispreparation for the proper cares, duties, interests, and delectations of life. The further a thing draws from any useful service or common occasion, the more pride there is in studying it. Whatever will serve best to prank up the mind for flaunting out its life away from home, that seems to be our first concern. To this end, we prefer something out of the common way; something that can be turned to no account, save to beguile a frivolous and fashionable leisure, or to mark people off from ordinary humanity, and wrap them up in the poor conceit of an aristocratic style. In short, we look upon the honest study of our honest mother English as a vulgar thing; [+] and it pleases us to forget that this squeamish turning up of the nose at what is near and common is just the vulgarest thing in the world. Surely we cannot too soon wake up to the plain truth, that real

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honor and elevation, as well as solid profit, are to grow by conversing with the things that live and work about us, and by giving our studious hours to those masters of English thought from whom we may learn to read, soberly, modestly, and with clear intelligence, a few pages in the book of life.

The chief argument in support of the prevailing custom is, that the study of languages, especially the Greek and Latin, is highly serviceable as a mental gymnastic. No doubt it is so. But the study, as it is managed with us, may be not unfairly charged with inverting the true relative importance of mental gymnastic and mental diet. Formerly the Greek and Latin were held to be enough; but now, by adding three or four modern languages, we are making the linguistic element altogether too prominent. We thus give the mind little time for feeding, little matter to feed upon; and so keep it exercising when it ought to be feeding: for so the study of words has much exercise and little food. Now, such an excess of activity is not favorable to healthy growth. Substituting stimulants for nourishment is as bad for the mind as for the body. Supply the mind with wholesome natural food; do all you can to tempt and awaken the appetite; and then trust somewhat to Nature. True, some minds, do your best, will not eat; but, if they do not eat, then they ought not to act. For dullness, let me tell you, is not so bad as disease; and, from straining so hard to stimulate and force the mind into action without eating, nothing but disease can result. Depend upon it, there is something wrong with us here: food and exercise are not rightly proportioned in our method. In keeping the young mind so much on a stretch of activity, as if the mere exercise of its powers were to be sought for its own sake, we are at war with Nature. And a feverish, restless, mischievous

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activity of mind is the natural consequence of such a course; unless, which is sometimes the case, the mental forces get dried into stiffness from mere heat of gymnastic stress.

We are now having quite too much of this diseased mental activity. Perhaps our greatest danger lies in a want of mental repose. The chronic nervous intensity thus generated is eating the life out of us, and crushing the nobler energies of duty and virtue, ay, and of sound intelligence too.+ For, while we are thus overworking the mind, the muscular and nutritive systems of course suffer; so that, first we know, the mind itself gives out; and people go foolish or crazy from having been educated all into nerves. Composure is the right pulse of mental health, as it is also of moral; and "a heart that watches and receives" will gather more of wisdom than a head perpetually on the jump. We need "the harvest of a quiet eye," that feeds on the proportions of Truth as she beams from the works of Nature and from the pages of Nature's high priests. But now we must be in a giddy whirl of brain excitement, else we are miserable, and think our mental faculties are in peril of stagnation. Of intellectual athletes we have more than enough; men, and women too, who think to renovate the world, and to immortalize themselves, by being in a continual rapture and tumult of brain exercise; minds hopelessly disorbed from the calmness of reason, and held in a fever of activity from sheer lack of strength to sit still. It was such minds that Bacon had in view when he described man in a certain state as being "a busy, mischievous, wretched thing, no better than a kind of vermin." To be intellectual, to write books, to do wonders in mental pyrotechny, is not the chief end of man, nor can we make it so. This is indeed what we seem to be aiming at, but we shall

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fail; Nature will prove too strong for us here: and, if we persist, she will just smash us up, and replace us with a people not so tormentedly smart. It is to the meek, not the brilliant, that the possession of the earth is promised.

My conclusion from the whole is, that, next to the elementary branches, and some parts of science, such as geography, astronomy, and what is called natural philosophy, standard authors in English literature ought to have a place in our school education. Nor am I sure but that, instead of thus postponing the latter to science, it were still better to put them on an equal footing with it. For they draw quite as much into the practical currents of our American life as any studies properly scientific do; and, which is of yet higher regard, they have it in them to be much more effective in shaping the character. For they are the right school of harmonious culture as distinguished from mere formal knowledge; that is, they are a discipline of humanity: and to have the soul rightly alive to the difference between the noble and the base is better than understanding the laws of chemical affinity.

As to the best way of teaching English literature, I may speak the more briefly on this, inasmuch as a good deal to the point has been, I hope not obscurely, implied in the remarks already made.

In the first place, I am clear that only a few of the very best and fittest authors should be used; and that these should be used long enough, and in large enough portions, for the pupils to get really at home with them, and for the grace and efficacy of them to become thoroughly steeped into the mind. Bacon tells us that "some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed

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and digested." Of course it is only the latter that I deem worthy to be used in school. And I lay special stress on the pupil's coming at an author in such a way, and staying with him so long, as to study him with honest love and delight. This is what sets and fixes the taste. And this is a thing that cannot be extemporized: the process necessarily takes considerable time. For wise men's thoughts are a presence to live in, to feed upon, and to grow into the likeness of. And the benefit of a right good book all depends upon this, that its virtue just *soak* into the mind, and there become a living, generative force.

Do you say that this shuts off from pupils the spur and charm of novelty? Yes, that it does, else I would not urge it. What I want first of all is to shut off the flashy, fugitive charm of novelty, so as to secure the solid, enduring charm of truth and beauty; for these are what it does the soul good to be charmed with, and to tie up in the society of, — the charm of a "concord that elevates and stills"; while the charm of novelty is but as "the crackling of thorns under a pot," — not the right music for soul-sweetening. "A thing of beauty is a joy forever." And they know nothing of the genesis of the human affections, who have not learned that these thrive best in the society of old familiar faces. To be running and rambling over a great many books, tasting a little here, a little there, and tying up with none, is good for nothing in school; nay, worse than nothing. Such a process of "unceasing change" is also a discipline of "perpetual emptiness." It is as if a man should turn free-lover, and take to himself a new wife every week; in which case I suppose he would soon become indifferent to them all, and conclude one woman to be just about as good as another. The household affections do not

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grow in that way. And the right method in the culture of the mind is to take a few choice books, and weave about them

> the fix'd delights of house and home,
> Friendships that will not break, and love that cannot roam.

Again: In teaching English literature, I think it is not best to proceed much, if at all, by recitations, but by what may be called exercises; the pupils reading the author under the direction, correction, and explanation of the teacher. The thing is to have the pupils, with the teacher's help and guidance, commune with the author while in class, and quietly drink in the sense and spirit of his workmanship. Such communing together of teacher and pupils with the mind of a good book cannot but be highly fruitful to them both: an interplay of fine sympathies and inspirations will soon spring up between them, and pleasant surprises of truth and good will be stealing over them. The process indeed can hardly fail to become a real sacrament of the heart between them; for they will here find how "one touch of nature makes the whole world kin."

Nor would I attempt to work into these exercises anything of grammar or rhetoric or philology, any further than this may be clearly needful or conducive to a full and fair understanding of the matter read.† To use a standard author mainly as a theme or text for carrying on studies in philology, is in my account just putting the cart before the horse. Here the end is or should be to make the pupils understand and relish what the author delivers; and whatever of philological exercise comes in should be held strictly subordinate to this.

With my classes in Shakespeare and Wordsworth, as also in Burke and Webster, I am never at all satisfied, unless I

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see the pupils freely taking pleasure in the workmanship. For such delight in a good book is to me a sure token and proof that its virtue is striking in and going to the spot.+ Rather say, it is a pledge, nay, it is the very pulsation, of sympathy and vital magnetism between the mind within and the object without. And without this blessed infection beaming in the face and sparkling in the eyes, even the honest striving of duty on the pupil's part rather discourages me. So, unless I can get the pupils to be happy in such communion, I am unhappy myself; and this, I suppose, because it is naturally unpleasant to see people standing in the presence and repeating the words of that which is good, and tasting no sweetness therein. For "what is noble should be sweet"; and ought, if possible, to be bound up with none but pleasant associations; that so delight and love may hold the mind in perpetual communion with the springs of health and joy. And if I can plant in young minds a genuine relish for the authors I have named, then I feel tolerably confident that the devils now swarming about us in the shape of bad books will stand little chance with them; for I know right well that those authors have kept legions of such devils off from me.

From all which it follows, next, that, in teaching English literature, I would have nothing to do with any works in formal rhetoric, or with any general outlines, or any rapid and wide surveys, or any of the school reading books now in use, which are made up of mere chips from a multitude of authors, and so can have little effect but to generate a rambling and desultory habit of mind.+ To illustrate my meaning, it may not be amiss to observe, that some years ago I knew of a programme being set forth officially, which embraced little bits from a whole rabble of American authors,

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most of them still living; but not a single sentence from Daniel Webster, who, it seems to me, is perhaps the only American author that ought to have been included in the list. This programme was drawn up for a course in English literature to be used in the public schools. Instead of such a miscellaneous collection of splinters, my thought was then, and is now, Give us a good large block of Webster; enough for at least two exercises a week through half a year. This would afford a fair chance of making the pupils really at home with one tall and genuine roll of intellectual manhood; which done, they would then have something to guide and prompt them into the society of other kindred rolls: whereas, with the plan proposed, there is no chance of getting them at home with any intellectual manhood at all; nay, rather, it is just the way to keep them without any intellectual home, — a nomadic tribe of literary puddle-sippers.

As for the matter of rhetoric, all that can be of much use in this is, I think, best learned in the concrete, and by familiarizing the mind with standard models of excellence.† For the right use of speech goes by habit, not by rule. And if people should happen to use their vernacular clearly and handsomely without knowing why, where is the harm of it? Is not that enough? What more do you want? If you would learn to speak and write the English tongue correctly, tastefully, persuasively, leave the rhetorics behind, and give your days and nights to the masters of English style. This will tend to keep you from all affectation of "fine writing," than which literature has nothing more empty and vapid. Besides, it is only *after* the mind has grown largely and closely conversant with standard authors, that studying rhetorical rules and forms can be of much practical use, however it may do for showing off in recitation. And I am in

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doubt whether it were not better omitted even then: for such study, in so far as it is trusted in for forming a good style, can hardly work anything but damage in that respect; and this because it naturally sets one to imitating other men's verbal felicities; which is simply a pestilent vice of style. Therewithal the study is but too apt to possess the student, perhaps unconsciously, with the notion that men are to "laugh by precept only, and shed tears by rule"; a sort of laughter and tears from which I shall beg to be excused. On this point, my first, second, and third counsel is, —

> the live current quaff,
> And let the groveler sip his stagnant pool,
> In fear that else, when Critics grave and cool
> Have killed him, Scorn should write his epitaph.

Against the course I have been marking out, the objection is sometimes urged that it would cut pupils off from contemporary authors. It would do so indeed, and I like it the better for that. I have already implied that no literary workmanship, short of the best there is to be had, ought to be drawn upon for use in school. For the natural alliance of taste and morals is much closer than most people suppose. In fact, taste is, in my account, a kind of intellectual conscience: downright, perfect honesty is the first principle of it; solidity is its prime law; and all sorts of pretense, affectation, and sham are its aversion: so that it amounts to about the same thing as the perfect manliness which I find in Webster's style. — Now, for the due approval of excellence in literary art, a longer time than the individual life is commonly required. Of the popular writers now living, probably not one in five hundred will be heard of thirty years hence. I have myself outlived two generations of just such immortal writers, — whole regiments of them. Of course there are

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fashions in literature, as in other things. These are apt to be bad enough at the best, — bad enough anywhere; but the school is just the last place, except the church, where they ought to be encouraged. Be assured that, in the long run, it will not pay to have our children in school making acquaintance with the fashionable writers of the day. For, long before the pupils now in school reach maturity, another set of writers will be in popular vogue; their tenure to be equally transient in turn.

Unquestionably the right way in this matter is, to start the young with such authors as have been tested and approved by a large collective judgment.+ For it is not what pleases at first, but what pleases permanently, that the human mind cares to keep alive. What has thus withstood the wear of time carries solid proof of having strength and virtue in it. For example, poetry that has no holiness in it may be, for it often has been, vastly popular in its day; but it has and can have no lasting hold on the heart of man. True, there may be good books written in our day; I think there are: but there needs a longer trial than one generation to certify us of the fact, so as to warrant us in adopting an author for standard use. And that a new book seems to us good, may be in virtue of some superficial prepossession which a larger trial will utterly explode. We need better assurance than that.

It is indeed sometimes urged that, if the young be thus trained up with old authors, they will be in danger of falling behind the age.+ But it is not so. The surest way of coming at such a result is by preëngaging them with the literary freaks and fashions and popularities of the day. To hold them aloof from such flitting popularities, to steep their minds in the efficacy of such books as have always been, and are

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likely to be, above the fashion of the day, — this is the true course for setting them *in advance* of the time; and, unless they be set in advance of it, they will certainly fail to keep abreast with it. For the wisdom that has had the long and strong approval of the past, is most likely to be the wisdom of the future; and the way to keep pace with the age is by dwelling with its wisdom, not with its folly. In fact, a taste for the shifting literary fashions and popularities of the hour springs from shallowness and leads to shallowness. And to knit your pupils up close with old standards, is the best thing you can do for them, both mentally and morally.

And I confess I like to see the young growing enthusiastic over the treasured wisdom and eloquence of their forefathers. This is a natural and wholesome inspiration, and such as the soul can hardly drink in or catch without being lifted and expanded by it. Worth much for the knowledge it furthers, it is worth far more for the manhood it quickens. And I think none the worse of it, that it may do somewhat towards chastising down the miserable conceit now so rife amongst us, that light never really dawned on the world till about that glorious time when our eyes were first opened, and we began to shed our wisdom abroad. To be sure, the atmosphere of the past now stands impeached as being a very dull and sleepy atmosphere: nevertheless I rather like it, and think I have often found much health and comfort in breathing it. Some old writer tells us that "no man having drunk old wine straightway desireth the new; for he saith the old is better." I am much of the same opinion. In short, old wine, old books, old friends, old songs, "the precious music of the heart," are the wine, the books, the friends, the songs for me!

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Besides, we have quite enough of the present outside of the school; and one of our greatest needs at this very time is more of inspiration from the past. Living too much in the present is not good either for the mind or for the heart: its tendency is to steep the soul in the transient popularities of the hour, and to vulgarize the whole man. Not that the present age is worse than former ages; it may even be better as a whole: but what is bad or worthless in an age generally dies with the age: so that only the great and good of the past touches us; while of the present we are most touched by that which is little and mean. The shriekings and jabberings of an age's folly almost always drown, for the time being, the eloquence of its wisdom: but the eloquence lives and speaks after the jabberings have gone silent, God's air refusing to propagate them. So let our youth now and then breathe and listen an hour or two in the old intellectual fatherland, where all the foul noises have long since died away, leaving the pure music to sound up full and clear.+

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# SHAKESPEARE AS A TEXT-BOOK[1]

Shakespeare's dramas, confessedly the greatest classic and literary treasure of the world, — the Bible only excepted, — are rapidly growing into use as a text-book in schools and institutions of learning. A close and regular course of study in them has at length come to be widely recognized as among our very best means both for acquiring a right knowledge and use of the English tongue, and also, which is of still more importance, for conversing with the truth of things.

Some of the plays, however, owing to the nature of the subjects and to the Poet's mode of treating them, are quite impracticable for such use, and cannot be made suitable without so much of amputation as would, in effect, let all the lifeblood out of them. Others of them, again, and such withal as are the very best for study in class, have more or less of matter in them which, while nowise essential to the proper health and integrity of the work, is greatly in the way, and sometimes so embarrassing as to hinder seriously both the pleasure and the profit of the study. All of them, moreover, for obvious reasons, need a certain measure and style of annotation, specially adapted, as far as may be, to rendering the Poet's language, imagery, and allusions intelligible and interesting to young minds, who cannot be

[1] Reprinted, with certain changes and omissions, from the Editor's Preface to the first volume of his School Shakespeare, as originally published in 1870.



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supposed to be much at home in the peculiarities of English thought and expression three hundred years ago.

Hence a need has come to be strongly and extensively felt, of a selection of Shakespeare's plays, prepared and set forth with a special eye to the use in question. I have received many assurances of this from others, and have found abundant evidence of it in my own case. A pretty long and large and varied experience in teaching Shakespeare in class has brought home to me, beyond peradventure, the pressing occasion of some such work as is here offered to the public. And the want, be it observed, is not of mere chips and fragments of the Poet, but of whole plays, with the development of character and the course of action preserved unmutilated and entire, and with only such erasures as are really demanded by the just proprieties of intercourse between teacher and pupils, and of pupils with one another.

The plays, in all cases, are given entire, save the bare omission of such lines and expressions as I have always deemed it necessary to omit in class.[+] The omissions, I believe, do not in any case reach so far as to impair in the least either the delineation of character or the dramatic action. On the other hand, I have not meant to retain any matter not fairly pronounceable in any class, however composed. My own opinion clearly is, that if Shakespeare cannot be used as a text-book without overstepping the just bounds of modest and decorous speech, then such use were better not attempted. For purity and rectitude of manners are worth more than any intellectual benefit to be derived from the poetry and wisdom even of a Shakespeare. In *Julius Cæsar*, for instance, as also in *King Richard II*, I have not found occasion to cut out or

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change anything whatsoever; there being, as I think, not a single word in those plays unfit to cross the chariest lips. And in several others the omissions are very slight indeed, sometimes not extending to more than half a dozen lines in a whole play.

Having said thus much, it seems but due to add, that I hold Shakespeare's workmanship to be everywhere free from the least blame of moral infection or taint: I know of no passage that can be hurtful to any fair mind, if taken in its proper connection with the whole. But of course everybody knows that there may be many things right and proper in themselves, which however ought not to be spoken, and which it is very desirable not to have before the eye, in the sacred intercourse of teacher and pupils.

No pains have been spared, either in preparing the copy or in correcting the proofs, to set forth a pure and accurate text of the Poet. In many cases of various readings, there are, and probably always will be, considerable differences of opinion as to which is the best. In this matter, I can but claim to have used my best judgment, such as it is after more than forty years' study of the Poet.

In the matter of annotation, it is not easy to hit just the right medium between too much and too little. Here, again, I have been mainly guided by the results of my own experience in teaching; aiming to give so many and such notes as I have found needful or conducive to a full and clear understanding of the Poet's thought. Besides the need of economizing space, I have wished to avoid distracting or diverting the student's attention overmuch from the special object-matter of the Poet's scenes.

And here I feel moved to protest against Shakespeare's being used, as some apparently would use him, too much as

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a mere occasion for carrying on general exercises in grammar and philology. These, to be sure, are essential parts of a right English schooling; but they can be learned just as well from other books, — books which it is no sin not to love, and no loss to forget after leaving school. And in studying Shakespeare the pupil's mind should be put as closely and directly as possible in intelligent sympathy with the Poet's own mental deliverances; everything else being made strictly subordinate to this. In other words, the purpose should ever be kept foremost to teach or to learn Shakespeare, and not to use him as a means of teaching or learning something else. With him, preëminently, language is the medium, not the object of thought, insomuch that he seems to have used it almost unconsciously. It is true, his language, especially with beginners, must needs be itself made more or less an object of study; but this should be done so far only as is necessary in order to its proper efficacy as a medium of communion with his men and women, and with the transpirations of character and the workings of human nature as presented in them.

Shakespeare, be it remembered, is not one of those books which are of no further use after being studied in school, or which are as scaffoldage, to be thrown aside as soon as the roof is on; and it is better he should not be used as a text-book at all, than that such use should be so conducted as to breed a dislike of him: and some care may well be taken against pushing the grammatical and linguistic part of the study so far as to obstruct the proper virtue of his pages, and lest the effect be rather to quench than kindle the faculties and susceptibilities for that which is most living and operative in him, or for what may be called the Shakespeare of Shakespeare.

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It is what young people learn to take pleasure in, what they build up happy thoughts and associations about, and what steals smoothly and silently into the heart, and there becomes a vital treasure of delight, that mainly determines their characters. In comparison with this, mere intellectual acquirements and furnishings, and even ethical arguments and convictions, are of insignificant value. "The forms of young imagination" have more force than anything else to keep the heart pure. To preoccupy the mind with right tastes and noble loves, and with a stock of grand and pure conceptions, and thus to foreclose, as far as may be, the invitations of what is false and flashy and sensational, the intellectual fashions and frivolities and diseases of the day, is the first principle of all wise and wholesome training both in school and at home. For this process and to this end, except the Bible, we have nothing better than the dramas of Shakespeare. And the best fruit of studying him is to come by letting the efficacies of his genius insinuate themselves quietly into "the eye and prospect of the soul," and by binding his creations home upon the thoughts and affections as a fund of inexhaustible sweetness and refreshment. And there is probably more danger that teachers will hinder this process by overworking some subsidiary matter, than that the process will fail to take care of itself, provided the pupils be set and held in free and natural communication with the Poet; all exercises in grammar and philology being used simply to aid, and not to disturb, the clear apprehension of what he delivers.

Such are the thoughts which have been uppermost in my mind, and have mainly shaped my course, in preparing the notes. How far the execution accords with my design and makes it good, is not for me to judge. In my

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teaching, especially with younger classes, I of course often go much more into the details of verbal and syntactical exegesis than is shown in the annotation. But it is presumed that every one who may undertake to teach Shakespeare will be sufficiently booked in the logic of grammar, the laws of language, and the construction and analysis of sentences, to carry on the work out of his own head, and as he finds it needful or profitable to do so. Textual explanation is another matter indeed, and may need to be prosecuted somewhat further; for the Poet's style is intensely idiomatic, generally charged with metaphoric audacity, often overcrammed with meaning, and sometimes very obscure: yet even here it is thought that much had better be left to the occasions and resources of individual teachers. For, after all, nothing but a pretty thorough steeping of the teacher's mind in the Shakespearean idiom can bring him fairly through this part of his work. If he be not himself at home with Shakespeare, he can hardly expect to make others so.

As to the method or methods of teaching in Shakespeare, here again much should and indeed must be left to individual judgment and adaptation. This is a thing not capable of being stereotyped, and passed on from hand to hand. The method that works very well in one man's hands may not work at all in another's. Thus much, however, may be not unfitly spoken, that I do not believe at all in turning the schoolroom into a playhouse or anything of that sort. My work and method in class aim at a mixed and varied exercise in reading, language, character, versification, and art. Especially I make much of reading, both for the utility and the accomplishment of it:[+] this, in fact, is the groundwork of all my instructions; and in ordering this I drive, or endeavor to drive, right at the simple

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truth of the matter, and at a sincere and natural expression of it. In other words, all my efforts in this behalf are meant to converge at the point of bringing the pupils first to understand the Poet's lines fairly, and then so to pronounce them that an intelligent listener may understand them; taking for granted that, if this point be secured, the proper moral, intellectual, and æsthetic effect of them will follow of its own accord; and the more silent and unobserved its coming is, the better.

I therefore neither practice nor encourage any straining or forcing of the process: any using of the whip or the spur he regards as out of place: however lively and intense the exertion of the student's faculties may be, I aim to have it spontaneous, genial, and free; the result of inward kindling, not of external pressure. Thus the process, throughout, on the part of the pupils, is meant to be a quiet, gentle, yet earnest communing with the Poet's forms and with the spirit of them, so that their grace and efficacy may pass secretly and insensibly into the mind; because the less the pupils are at the time conscious of getting from him, the more they will really get. And I am right well persuaded, withal, that exercises in Shakespeare may be and ought to be so conducted, that the students shall be fresher and stronger at the close of them than at the beginning.

To induce just and clear perceptions of the Poet's characters; to bring pupils to discriminate and taste their distinctive lines of mental, moral, and practical physiognomy; to make them enter into their idioms of thought and manner, their springs, modes, and vitalities of action, — this is a higher and riper and slower process. There must needs be a certain measure of preparation for it, and this, of course, cannot be extemporized. Yet, this part of the exercise left

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out, the study can be little but a dry training in the letter of the Poet's workmanship, without the life and substance of it. Besides, it is this personal acquaintance and convivation with the Poet's men and women that makes, more than anything else, the perennial verdure and charm of his scenes. No one who once gets to be thus inward and at home with his delineations can ever weary of them or outgrow the interest of them; for, so taken, "age cannot wither them, nor custom stale their infinite variety."

Which naturally raises the question, At what age should the study of Shakespeare be undertaken? And the answer is, Not till the student is, at least in some fair degree, capable of this part of the exercise. But young people are, or may be made, apprehensive and receptive of characteristic traits as delivered in forms of art, earlier than most of us are apt to suppose. *Featurely* expression in picture, fable, and poetry, is not so very hard a thing for the youthful faculties to catch and take in the virtue of. And it may be safely presumed that, if average minds be duly placed and held within the reach of Shakespeare's light and warmth, their latent aptitudes for the exercise in question will germinate and grow as early as, say, the middle period of ordinary academic life. They can at least be started in the process by that time, if not before. At all events, using my own experience, as well as the reason of the thing, for my test and guide, I can hardly think it a good use either of the time or of the book, for pupils to enter upon the study of Shakespeare, until they are prepared to go along with him in those points of his cunning workmanship. There is quite too much of crowding and cramming in our education already; the effects of which may be seen in a pretty large stock of intellectual and moral shoddy; and any extending

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of this process into the walks of Shakespeare cannot be too earnestly deprecated, or too carefully avoided.

As to exercises in the Poet's versification and art, I never attempt to prosecute these at all, except in his older classes;[+] the former because it is too dry, the latter because it is too high. Moreover, the peculiar richness and variety of the Poet's verbal modulation, the subtile and winding, yet severe and never-cloying music of his verse, which seems to voice the essential harmonies of intellectual and emotional beauty, are among those qualities of his workmanship which are the last to be consciously appreciated even by the most pronounced Shakespeareans. At least, I have found it so in my own experience; and some of our ripest students of the Poet, those who have made a lifelong study of him, have told me that it was the same in theirs. So, too, the principles and philosophy of art, as involved in Shakespeare's creations, are matter for the ripest and best-trained minds; too deep and intricate perhaps for any but such as make a special study in pursuits of that nature. These points cannot be treated here, and have received such treatment as I could give them, in my work entitled *Shakespeare's Life, Art, and Characters.*

In conclusion, I beg to say, that for some years past I have felt a strong and growing desire to do what I could towards working Shakespeare into general and systematic use as a text-book in the education of youth. It was in pursuance of that long-cherished wish, that I undertook the present work. If the work should prove in any degree useful in furthering that cause, I will deem my labors well taken and amply rewarded. For, in truth, it seems to me that we stay quite too much in the study of words, and quite

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too little in that of things; and that the reform now most needed in our educational modes is the giving much more time to the masters of our native language, which is to us naturally a *medium* of intellectual vision, and much less to the study of foreign languages, which, from the nature of the case, must needs be to us, for the most part, the *object* of such vision.

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# HOW TO USE SHAKESPEARE IN SCHOOL

As I have long been in frequent receipt of letters asking for advice or suggestions as to the best way of using Shakespeare in class, I have concluded to write out and print some of my thoughts on that subject. On one or two previous occasions, I have indeed moved the theme, but only, for the most part, incidentally, and in subordinate connection with other topics, never with anything like a round and full exposition of it.

And in the first place I am to remark, that in such a matter no one can make up or describe, in detail, a method of teaching for another: in many points every teacher must strike out his or her own method; for a method that works very well in one person's hands may nevertheless fail entirely in another's.+ Some general reasons or principles of method, together with a few practical hints of detail, is about all that I can undertake to give; this too rather with a view to setting teachers' own minds at work in devising ways, than to marking out any formal course of procedure.

In the second place, here, as elsewhere, the method of teaching is to be shaped and suited to the particular purpose in hand; on the general principle, of course, that the end is to point out and prescribe the means. So, if the purpose be to make the pupils in our public schools Shakespeareans in any proper sense of the term, I can mark out no practicable method for the case, because I hold the purpose



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itself to be utterly impracticable; one that cannot possibly be carried out, and ought not to be, if it could. I find divers people talking and writing as if our boys and girls were to make a knowledge of Shakespeare the chief business of their life, and were to gain their living thereby. These have a sort of cant phrase current among them, about "knowing Shakespeare in an eminent sense"; and they are instructing us that, in order to this, we must study the English language historically, and acquire a technical mastery of Elizabethan idioms.

Now, to know Shakespeare in an eminent sense, if it means anything, must mean, I take it, to become Shakespeareans, or become eminent in the knowledge of Shakespeare; that is to say, we must have such a knowledge of Shakespeare as can be gained only by making a special and continuous, or at least very frequent, study of him through many long years. So the people in question seem intent upon some plan or programme of teaching whereby the pupils in our schools shall come out full-grown Shakespeareans; this too when half a dozen, or perhaps a dozen, of the Poet's plays is all they can possibly find time for studying through. And to this end, they would have them study the Poet's language historically, and so draw out largely into his social, moral, and mental surroundings, and ransack the literature of his time; therewithal they would have their *Shakespeare Grammars* and *Shakespeare Lexicons*, and all the apparatus for training the pupils in a sort of learned verbalism, and in analyzing and parsing the Poet's sentences.

Now I know of but three persons in the whole United States who have any just claim to be called Shakespeareans, or who can be truly said to know Shakespeare in an eminent sense. Those are, of course, Mr. Grant White, Mr. Howard

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Furness, and Mr. Joseph Crosby. Beyond this goodly trio, I cannot name a single person in the land who is able to go alone, or even to stand alone, in any question of textual criticism or textual correction. For that is what it is to be a Shakespearean. And these three have become Shakespeareans, not by the help of any labor-saving machinery, such as special grammars and lexicons, but by spending many years of close study and hard brain work in and around their author. Before reaching that point, they have not only had to study all through the Poet himself, and this a great many times, but also to make many excursions and sojournings in the popular, and even the erudite authorship of his period. And the work has been almost, if not altogether, a pure labor of love with them. They have pursued it with impassioned earnestness, as if they could find no rest for their souls without it.

Well, and what do you suppose the result of all this has done or is doing for them in the way of making a living? Do you suppose they can begin to purchase their bread and butter, or even so much as the bread without the butter, with the proceeds of their great learning and accomplishments in that kind? No, not a bit of it! For the necessaries of life, every man of them has to depend mostly, if not entirely, on other means. If they had nothing to feed upon but what their Shakespeare knowledge brings them, they would have mighty little use for their teeth. If you do not believe this, ask the men themselves: and if they tell you it is not so, then I will frankly own myself a naughty boy, and will do penance publicly for my naughtiness. For my own poor part, I know right well that I have no claim to be called a Shakespearean, albeit I may, perchance, have had some foolish aspirations that way. Nevertheless I will venture to say:

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that Shakespeare work does more towards procuring a livelihood for me than for either of the gentlemen named. This is doubtless because I am far inferior to them in Shakespearean acquirement and culture. Yet, if I had nothing but the returns of my labor in that kind to live upon, I should have to live a good deal more cheaply than I do. And there would probably be no difficulty in finding persons that were not born till some time after my study of Shakespeare began, who, notwithstanding, can now outbid me altogether in any auction of bread-buying popularity. This, no doubt, is because their natural gifts and fitness for the business are so superior to mine, that they might readily be extemporized into what no length of time and study could possibly educate me.

In all this the three gentlemen aforesaid are, I presume, far from thinking they have anything to complain of, or from having any disposition to complain; and I am certainly as far from this as they are. It is all in course, and all just right, except that I have a good deal better than I deserve. And both they and I know very well that nothing but a love of the thing can carry any one through such a work; that in the nature of things such pursuits have to be their own reward; and that here, as elsewhere, "love 's not love when it is mingled with regards that stand aloof from th' entire point."+

Such, then, is the course and process by which, and by which alone, men can come to know Shakespeare in any sense deserving to be called eminent. It is a process of close, continuous, lifelong study. And, in order to know the Poet in this eminent sense, one must know a good deal more of him than of anything else; that is to say, the pursuit must be something of a specialty with him; unless his mind be by nature far more encyclopedic than most men's

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are. Then too, in the case of those who have reached this point, the process had its beginning in a deep and strong love of the subject: Shakespeare has been a passion with them, perhaps I should say the master passion of their life: this was both the initiative impulse that set them a-going, and also the sustaining force that kept them going, in the work. Now such a love can hardly be wooed into life or made to sprout by a technical, parsing, gerund-grinding course of study.† The proper genesis and growth of love are not apt to proceed in that way. A long and loving study may indeed produce, or go to seed in, a grammar or a lexicon; but surely the grammar or the lexicon is not the thing to prompt or inaugurate the long and loving study. Or, if the study begin in that way, it will not be a study of the workmanship as poetry, but only, or chiefly, as the raw material of lingual science; that is to say, as a subject for verbal dissection and surgery.

If, then, any teacher would have his pupils go forth from school knowing Shakespeare in an eminent sense, he must shape and order his methods accordingly. What those methods may be, or should be, I cannot say; but I should think they must be quite in the high-pressure line, and I more than suspect they will prove abortive, after all. And here I cannot forbear to remark that some few of us are so stuck in old-fogyism, or so fossilized, as to hold that the main business of people in this world is to gain an honest living; and that they ought to be educated with a constant eye to that purpose. These, to be sure, look very like self-evident propositions; axioms, or mere truisms, which, nevertheless, our education seems determined to ignore entirely, and a due application of which would totally revolutionize our whole educational system.

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Now knowing Shakespeare in an eminent sense does not appear to be exactly the thing for gaining an honest living. All people but a few, a very few indeed, have, ought to have, must have, other things to do. I suspect that one Shakespearean in about five millions is enough. And a vast majority are to get their living by handwork, not by headwork; and even with those who live by headwork Shakespeare can very seldom be a leading interest. He can nowise be the substance or body of their mental food, but only, at the most, as a grateful seasoning thereof. Thinking of his poetry may be a pleasant and helpful companion for them in their business, but cannot be the business itself. His divine voice may be a sweetening tone, yet can be but a single tone, and an undertone at that, in the chorus of a well-ordered life and a daily round of honorable toil. Of the students in our colleges not one in a thousand, of the pupils in our high schools not one in a hundred thousand, can think, or ought to think, of becoming Shakespeareans. But most of them, it may be hoped, can become men and women of right intellectual tastes and loves, and so be capable of a pure and elevating pleasure in the converse of books. Surely, then, in the little time that can be found for studying Shakespeare, the teaching should be shaped to the end, not of making the pupils Shakespeareans, but only of doing somewhat — it cannot be much — towards making them wiser, better, happier men and women.

So, in reference to school study, what is the use of this cant about knowing Shakespeare in an eminent sense? Why talk of doing what no sane person can ever, for a moment, possibly think of attempting? The thing might well be passed by as one of the silliest cants that ever were canted, but that, as now often urged, it is of a very misleading and

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mischievous tendency; like that other common folly of telling all our boys that they may become President of the United States. This is the plain and simple truth of the matter, and as such I am for speaking it without any sort of mincing or disguise. In my vocabulary, indeed, on most occasions I choose that a spade be simply "a spade," and not "an instrument for removing earth."

This brings me to the main point, to what may be called the heart of my message. Since anything worthy to be termed an eminent knowledge of Shakespeare cannot possibly be gained or given in school, and could not be, even if ten times as many hours were spent in the study as can be, or ought to be, so spent, the question comes next, What, then, can be done? And my answer, in the fewest words, is this: The most and the best that we can hope to do, is to plant in the pupils, and to nurse up as far as may be, a genuine taste and love for Shakespeare's poetry. The planting and nursing of this taste is purely a matter of culture, and not of acquirement: it is not properly giving the pupils knowledge; it is but opening the road, and starting them on the way to knowledge. And such a taste, once well set in the mind, will be, or at least stand a good chance of being, an abiding principle, a prolific germ of wholesome and improving study: moreover it will naturally proceed till, in time, it comes to act as a strong elective instinct, causing the mind to gravitate towards what is good, and to recoil from what is bad: it may end in bringing, say, one in two millions to "know Shakespeare in an eminent sense"; but it can hardly fail to be a precious and fruitful gain to many, perhaps to most, possibly to all.

This I believe to be a thoroughly practicable aim. And as the aim itself is practicable, so there are practicable ways

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for attaining it or working towards it. What these ways are or may be, I can best set forth by tracing, as literally and distinctly as I know how, my own course of procedure in teaching.

In the first place, I never have had, never will have, any recitations whatever; but only what I call, simply, *exercises*, the pupils reading the author under my direction, correction, and explanation; the teacher and the taught thus communing together in the author's pages for the time being.† Nor do I ever require, though I commonly advise, that the matter to be read in class be read over by the pupils in private before coming to the exercise. Such preparation is indeed well, but not necessary. I am very well satisfied by having the pupils live, breathe, think, feel with the author while his words are on their lips and in their ears. As I wish to have them simply growing, or getting the food of growth, I do not care to have them making any conscious acquirement at all; my aim thus always being to produce the utmost possible amount of *silent* effect. And I much prefer to have the classes rather small, never including more than twenty pupils; even a somewhat smaller number is still better. Then, in Shakespeare, I always have the pupils read dramatically right round and round the class, myself calling the parts. When a speech is read, if the occasion seems to call for it, I make comments, ask questions, or have the pupils ask them, so as to be sure that they understand fairly what they are reading. That done, I call the next speech; and so the reading and the talking proceed till the class time is up.

In the second place, as to the nature and scope of these exercises, or the parts, elements, particulars they consist of.— In Shakespeare, the exercise is a mixed one of reading,

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language, and character. And I make a good deal of having the Poet's lines read properly; this too both for the utility of it and as a choice and refined accomplishment, and also because such a reading of them greatly enhances the pleasure of the exercise both to the readers themselves and to the hearers.+ Here, of course, such points come in as the right pronunciation of words, the right place and degree of emphasis, the right pauses and divisions of sense, the right tones and inflections of voice. But the particulars that make up good reading are too well known to need dwelling upon. Suffice it to say, that in this part of the exercise my whole care is to have the pupils understand what they are reading, and to pronounce it so that an intelligent listener may understand it: that done, I rest content. But I tolerate nothing theatrical or declamatory or oratorical or put on for effect in the style of reading, and insist on a clean, clear, simple, quiet voicing of the sense and meaning; no strut, no swell, but all plain and pure; that being my notion of *tasteful* reading.

Touching this point, I will but add that Shakspeare is both the easiest and also the hardest of all authors to read properly, — the easiest because he is the most natural, and the hardest for the same reason; and for both these reasons together he is the best of all authors for training people in the art of reading: for an art it is, and a very high one too, insomuch that pure and perfect reading is one of the rarest things in the world, as it is also one of the delightfullest. The best description of what it is that now occurs to me is in *Guy Mannering*, chapter 29th, where Julia Mannering writes to her friend how, of an evening, her father is wont to sweeten their home and its fireside by the choice matter and the tasteful manner of his reading. And so my happy

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life — for it is a happy one — has little of better happiness in it than hearing my own beloved pupils read Shakespeare.

As to the language part of the exercise, this is chiefly concerned with the meaning and force of the Poet's words, but also enters more or less into sundry points of grammar, word growth, prosody, and rhetoric, making the whole as little technical as possible. And I use, or aim to use, all this for the one sole purpose of getting the pupils to understand what is immediately before them; not looking at all to any lingual or philological purposes lying beyond the matter directly in hand. And here I take the utmost care not to push the part of verbal comment and explanation so long or so far as to become dull and tedious to the pupils. For as I wish them to study Shakespeare, simply that they may learn to understand and to love his poetry itself, so I must and will have them take pleasure in the process; and people are not apt to fall or to grow in love with things that bore them. I would much rather they should not fully understand his thought, or not take in the full sense of his lines, than that they should feel anything of weariness or disgust in the study; for the defect of present comprehension can easily be repaired in the future, but not so the disgust. If they really love the poetry, and find it pleasant to their souls, I 'll risk the rest.

In truth, average pupils do not need nearly so much of catechising and explaining as many teachers are apt to suppose. I have known divers cases where this process was carried to a very inordinate and hurtful excess, the matter being all chopped into a fine mince-meat of items; questions and topics being multiplied to the last degree of minuteness and tenuity. Often well-nigh a hundred questions are pressed where there ought not to be more than one or two;

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the aim being, apparently, to force an *exhaustive* grammatical study of the matter. And exhaustive of the pupil's interest and patience it may well prove to be. This is not studying Shakespeare, but merely using him as an occasion for studying something else. Surely, surely, such a course "is not, nor it cannot come to, good": it is just the way to make pupils loathe the study as an intolerable bore, and wish the Poet had never been born. The thing to be aimed at before all others is, to draw and hold the pupil's mind in immediate contact with the poetry; and such a multitude of mincing questions and comments is just a thick wedge of tiresome obstruction and separation driven in between the two. In my own teaching, my greatest fear commonly is, lest I may strangle and squelch the proper virtue and efficacy of the Poet's lines with my own incontinent catechetical and exegetical babble.

Next, for the character part of the exercise. And here I have to say, at the start, that I cannot think it a good use of time to put pupils to the study of Shakespeare at all, until they have got strength and ripeness of mind enough to enter, at least in some fair measure, into the transpirations of character in his persons. For this is indeed the Shakespeare of Shakespeare. And the process is as far as you can think from being a mere formal or mechanical or routine handling of words and phrases and figures of speech: it is nothing less than to hear and to see the hearts and souls of the persons in what they say and do; to feel, as it were, the very pulse throbs of their inner life. Herein it is that Shakespeare's unapproached and unapproachable mastery of human nature lies. Nor can I bear to have his poetry studied merely as a curious thing standing outside of and apart from the common life of man, but as drawing

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directly into the living current of human interests, feelings, duties, needs, occasions. So I like to be often running the Poet's thoughts, and carrying the pupils with them, right out and home to the business and bosom of humanity about them; into the follies, vices, and virtues, the meannesses and nobilities, the loves, joys, sorrows, and shames, the lapses and grandeurs, the disciplines, disasters, devotions, and divinities, of men and women as they really are in the world. For so the right use of his poetry is, to subserve the ends of life, not of talk. And if this part be rightly done, pupils will soon learn that "our gentle Shakespeare" is not a prodigious enchanter playing with sublime or grotesque imaginations for their amusement, but a friend and brother, all alive with the same heart that is in them; and who, while he is but little less than an angel, is also at the same time but little more than themselves; so that, beginning where his feet are, they can gradually rise, and keep rising, till they come to be at home where his great, deep, mighty intellect is.

Such, substantially, and in some detail, is the course I have uniformly pursued in my Shakespeare classes. I have never cared to have my pupils make any show in analyzing and parsing the Poet's language, but I have cared much, very much, to have them understand and enjoy his poetry. Accordingly I have never touched the former at all, except so far as was clearly needful in order to secure the latter. And as the poetry was made for the purpose of being enjoyed, so, when I have seen the pupils enjoying it, this has been to me sufficient proof that they rightly understood it. True, I have never had, nor have I ever wanted, any available but cheap percentages of proficiency to set off my work: perhaps my pupils have seldom had any idea

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of what they were getting from the study. Very well; then it has at least not fostered conceit in them: so I wished to have it, so was glad to have it: the results I aimed at were far off in the future; nor have I had any fear of those results failing to emerge in due time. In fact, I cleave rather fondly to the hope of being remembered by my pupils with some affection after I shall be no more; and I know right well that the best fruits of the best mental planting have and must have a pretty long interval between the seedtime and the harvest.†

Once, indeed, and it was my very first attempt, having a class of highly intelligent young ladies, I undertook to put them through a pretty severe drill in prosody: after enduring it awhile they remonstrated with me, giving me to understand that they wanted the light and pleasure properly belonging to the study, and not the tediousness that pedantry or mere technical learning could force into it. They were right; and herein I probably learned more from them than they did from me. And so teaching of Shakespeare has been just the happiest occupation of my life: the wholesomest and most tonic too; disposing me more than any other to severe and earnest thought: no drudgery in it, no dullness about it; but "as full of spirit as the month of May," and joyous as Wordsworth's lark hiding himself in the light of morning, and

> With a soul as strong as a mountain river
> Pouring out praise to the Almighty Giver.

But now certain wise ones are telling us that this is all wrong; that teaching Shakespeare in this way is making, or tending to make, the study "an entertainment," and so not the "noble study" that it ought to be; meaning, I suppose, by *noble study*, such a study as would bring the

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pupils to know Shakespeare in the eminent sense remarked upon before. What is this but to proceed in the work just as if the pupils were to become Shakespeareans; that is, specialists in that particular line?

Thus they would import into this study the same false and vicious mode that has come to be used with the classics in our colleges. This mode is, to keep pegging away continually at points of grammar and etymology, so as to leave no time or thought for the sense and meaning of what is read. Thus the classical author is used merely or mainly for the purpose of teaching the grammar, not the grammar for the purpose of understanding the author. For the practical upshot of such a course is, to have the student learn what modern linguists and grammarians have compiled, not what the old Greeks and Romans thought. This hind-first or hindmost-foremost process has grown to be a dreadful nuisance in our practice, making the study of Greek and Latin inexpressibly lifeless and wearisome; and utterly fruitless withal as regards real growth of mind and culture of taste.

Some years ago, I had a talk on this subject with our late venerable patriarch of American letters, whose only grandson had then recently graduated from college. He told me he had gathered from the young man to what a wasteful and vicious extreme the thing was carried; and he spoke in terms of severe censure and reprobation of the custom. And so I have heard how a very learned professor one day spent the time of a whole recitation in talking about a comma that had been inserted in a Greek text; telling the class who inserted it, and when and why he did so; also who had since accepted it, and who had since rejected it, and when and why; also what effect the insertion had, and what the omission, on the sense of the passage. Now, if

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the students had all been predestined or predetermined specialists in Greek, this might possibly have been the right way; but, as they were not so predestined or predetermined, the way was most certainly wrong, and a worse one could hardly have been taken. For the right course of study for those who are to be specialists in this or that pursuit is one thing; the right course for those who cannot be, and have no thought of being, specialists is a very different thing; and to transfer the former course to the latter class, is a most preposterous blunder, yes, and a most mischievous one too.

I have lately been given to understand that some of our best classical teachers have become sensible of this great error, and have set to work to correct it in practice. I understand also that noble old Harvard, wise in this, as in many other things, is leading the return to the older and better way. I hope most devoutly that it is so; for the proper effect of the modern way can hardly be any other than to attenuate and chill and dwarf the student's better faculties. The thing, to be sure, has been done in the name of thoroughness, but I believe it has proved thorough to no end but that of unsinewing the mind, and drying the sap out of it.

But now the selfsame false mode that has thus run itself into the ground in classical study must, it seems, be used in the study of English authors. For so the wise ones aforesaid, those who are for having everybody know Shakespeare in an eminent sense, would, apparently, have the study ennobled by continual diversions into the science of language, exercising the pupil's logical faculty, or rather his memory, with points of etymology, grammar, historical usage, etc.; points that are, or may be made to appear, scientifically demonstrable. Thus the thing they seem to

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have in view is about the same that certain positivist thinkers mean when they would persuade us that no knowledge is really worth having but what stands on a basis of scientific demonstration, so that we not only may be certain of its truth, but cannot possibly be otherwise.

So I have somewhere read of a certain mathematician who, on reading *Paradise Lost*, made this profound criticism, that "it was a very pretty piece of work, but he did not see that it proved anything." But, if he had studied it in the modern way of studying poetry, he would have found that divers things might be proved from it; as, for instance, that a metaphor and a simile are at bottom one and the same thing, differing only in form, and that the author very seldom, if ever, makes use of the word *its*. And so the singing of a bird does not prove anything scientifically; and your best way of getting scientific knowledge about the little creature is by dissecting him, so as to find out where the music comes from, and how it is made. And so, again, what good can the flowers growing on your mother's grave do you, unless you use them as things to "peep and botanize" about, like the "philosopher" in one of Wordsworth's poems?

The study of Shakespeare an entertainment? Yes, to be sure, precisely that, if you please to call it so; a pastime, a recreation, a delight. This is just what, in my notion of things, such a study ought to be. Why, what else should it be? It is just what I have always tried my utmost, and I trust I may say with some little success, to make the study. Shakespeare's poetry, has it not a right to be to us a perennial spring of sweetness and refreshment, a thing

> **Round which, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,**
> **Our pastime and our happiness may grow?**

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And so my supreme desire has been that the time spent in the study should be, to the pupils, brimful of quiet gladness and pleasantness; and in so far as at any time it has not been so, just so far I have regarded my work as a sorry failure, and have determined to try and do better next time. What the dickens — I beg everybody's pardon — what can be the proper use of studying Shakespeare's poetry without enjoyment? Or do you suppose that any one can really delight in his poetry, without reaping therefrom the highest and purest benefit? The delectation is itself the appropriate earnest and proof that the student is drinking in — without knowing it indeed, and all the better for that — just the truest, deepest, finest culture that any poetry can give. What touches the mind's heart is apt to cause pleasure; what merely grubs in its outskirts and suburbs is apt to be tedious and dull. Assuredly, therefore, if a teacher finds that his or her pupils, or any of them, cannot be wooed and won to take pleasure in the study of Shakespeare, then either the teacher should forthwith go to teaching something else, or the pupils should be put to some other study.

What wise and wonderful ideas our progressive oblivion of the past is putting into people's heads! Why, it has been, from time immemorial, a settled axiom, that the proper aim of poetry is to please; of the highest poetry, to make wisdom and virtue pleasant, to crown the True and the Good with delight and joy. This is the very constituent of the poet's art; that without which it has no adequate reason for being. To clothe the austere forms of truth and wisdom with heart-taking beauty and sweetness, is its life and law. But then it is only when poetry is read as poetry that it is bound to please. When or so far as it is studied only as

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grammar or logic, it has a perfect right to be unpleasant. Of course I hold that poetry, especially Shakespeare's, ought to be read as poetry; and when it is not read with pleasure, the right grace and profit of the reading are missed. For the proper instructiveness of poetry is essentially dependent on its pleasantness; whereas in other forms of writing this order is or may be reversed. The sense or the conscience of what is morally good and right should indeed have a hand, and a prerogative hand, in shaping our pleasures; and so, to be sure, it must be, else the pleasures will needs be transient, and even the seedtime of future pains. So right-minded people ought to desire, and do desire, to find pleasure in what is right and good; the highest pleasure in what is rightest and best: nevertheless the pleasure of the thing is what puts its healing, purifying, regenerating virtue into action; and to converse with what is in itself beautiful and good without tasting any pleasantness in it, is or may be a positive harm.

But, indeed, our education has totally lost the idea of culture, and consequently has thrown aside the proper methods of it: it makes no account of anything but acquirements. And the reason seems to be somewhat as follows: — The process of culture is silent and unconscious, because it works deep in the mind; the process of acquirement is conscious and loud, because its work is all on the mind's surface. Moreover the former is exceedingly slow, insomuch as to yield from day to day no audible results, and so cannot be made available for effect in recitation: the latter is rapid, yielding recitable results from hour to hour; the effect comes quickly, is quickly told in recitation, and makes a splendid appearance, thus tickling the vanity of pupils mightily, as also of their loving (self-loving?) parents.

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But then, on the other hand, the culture that you have once got you thenceforward keep, and can nowise part with or lose it; slow in coming, it comes to stay with you, and to be an indelible part of you: whereas your acquirement is, for the most part, quickly got, and as quickly lost; for, indeed, it makes no part of the mind, but merely hangs or sticks on its outside. So, here, the pupil just crams in study, disgorges in recitation, and then forgets it all, to go through another like round of cramming, disgorging, and forgetting. Thus the pulse of your acquirement is easily counted, and foots up superbly from day to day; but nobody can count the pulse of your culture, for it has none, at least none that is or can be perceived. In other words, the course of culture is dimly marked by years; that of acquirement is plainly marked by hours.

And so no one can parse, or cares to parse, the delight he has in Shakespeare, for the parsing just kills the delight: the culture one gets from studying his poetry *as poetry*, he can nowise recite, for it is not a recitable thing, and he can tell you nothing about it: he can only say he loves the poetry, and that talking with it somehow recreates and refreshes him. But any one can easily learn to parse the Poet's words: what he gets from studying his poetry as grammar, or logic, or rhetoric, or prosody, this he can recite, can talk glibly about it; but it stirs no love in him, has no recreation or refreshment for him at all; none, that is, unless by touching his vanity, and putting him in love with himself for the pretty show he makes in recitation. There is, to be sure, a way of handling the study of Shakespeare, whereby the pupils may be led to take pleasure not so much in his poetry itself as in their own supposed knowledge and appreciation of it. That way, however, I just do not believe

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in at all; no! not even though it be the right way for bringing pupils to know Shakespeare in the eminent sense. I have myself learned him, if I may claim to know him at all, in a very uneminent sense, and have for more than forty years been drawn onwards in the study purely by the natural pleasantness of his poetry; and so I am content to have others do. Thus, you see, it has never been with me "a noble study" at all.

Well now, our education is continually saying, in effect if not in words, "What is the use of pursuing such studies, or pursuing them in such a way, as can produce no available results, nothing to show, from day to day? Put away your slow thing, whose course is but faintly marked even by years, and give us the spry thing, that marks its course brilliantly by days, perhaps by hours. Let the clock of our progress tick loudly, that we may always know just where it is, and just where we are. Except we can count the pulse of your process, we will not believe there is any life or virtue in it. None of your silences for us, if you please!"

A few words now on another, yet nearly connected, topic, and I have done. — I have long thought, and the thought has kept strengthening with me from year to year, that our educational work proceeds altogether too much by recitations. Our school routine is now a steady stream of these, so that teachers have no time for anything else; the pupils being thus held in a continual process of alternate crammings and disgorgings. As part and parcel of this recitation system, we must have frequent examinations and exhibitions, for a more emphatic marking of our progress. The thing has grown to the height of a monstrous abuse, and is threatening most serious consequences. It is a huge perpetual motion of forcing and high pressure; no possible pains

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being spared to keep the pupils intensely conscious of their proficiency, or of their deficiency, as the case may be: motives of pride, vanity, shame, ambition, rivalry, emulation, are constantly appealed to and stimulated, and the nervous system kept boiling hot with them. Thus, to make the love of knowledge sprout soon enough, and grow fast and strong enough for our ideas, we are all the while dosing and provoking it with a sort of mental and moral cantharides. Surely, the old arguments of the rod and the ferule, as persuasives to diligence, were far wholesomer, yes, and far kinder too, than this constant application of intellectual drugs and high wines: the former only made the skin tingle and smart a little while, and that was the end of it; whereas the latter plants its pains within the very house of life, and leaves them rankling and festering there.+ So our way is, to spare the skin and kill the heart.

And, if the thing is not spoiling the boys, it is at all events killing the girls.+ For, as a general rule, girls are, I take it, more sensitive and excitable naturally than boys, and therefore more liable to have their brain and nervous system fatally wronged and diseased by this dreadful, this cruel, fomenting with unnatural stimulants and provocatives. To be sure, it makes them preternaturally bright and interesting for a while, and we think the process is working gloriously: but this is all because the dear creatures have come to blossom at a time when as yet the leaves should not have put forth; and so, when the proper time arrives for them to be in the full bloom of womanhood, leaf, blossom, and all are gone, leaving them faded and withered and joyless; and chronic ill health, premature old age, untimely death, are their lot and portion. Of course, the thing cannot fail to have the effect of devitalizing and demoralizing

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and dwarfing the mind itself. The bright glow in its cheeks is but the hectic flush of a consumptive state.

This is no fancy picture, no dream of speculative imagination: it is only too true in matter of fact; as any one may see, or rather as no one can choose but see, who uses his eyes upon what is going on about us. Why, Massachusetts cannot now build asylums fast enough for her multiplying insane; and, if things keep on as they are now going, the chances are that the whole State will in no very long time come to be almost one continuous hospital of lunatics. All this proceeds naturally and in course from our restless and reckless insistence on forcing what is, after all, but a showy, barren, conceited intellectualism. But, indeed, the consequences of this thing are, some of them, too appalling to be so much as hinted here: I can but speak the word *motherhood*, — a word even more laden with tenderness and sacred meaning than *womanhood*.

I have talked with a good many of our best teachers on this subject, never with any one who did not express a full concurrence with me in the opinion, that the recitation business is shockingly and ruinously overworked in our teaching. But they say they can do nothing, or at the best very little, to help it; the public will have it so; the thing has come to be a deep-seated chronic disease in our educational system: this disease has got to run its course and work itself through; it is to be hoped that, when matters are at the worst, they will take a turn, and begin to mend: at all events, time alone can work out a redress of the wrong. In all this they are perfectly right; so that the blame of the thing nowise rests with them. Neither does the blame rest ultimately with superintendents, supervisors, or committeemen, where Gail Hamilton, in her recent book, places it:

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the trouble lies further back, in the state of the public mind itself, which has for a long time been industriously, incessantly, systematically, perverted, corrupted, depraved, by plausible but shallow innovators and quacks.

The real truth is, things have come to that pass with us, that parents will not believe there is or can be any real growth of mind in their children, unless they can see them growing from day to day; whereas a growing that can be so seen is of course just no growing at all, but only a bloating; which I believe I have said somewhere before. In this wretched mispersuasion, they use all possible means to foster in their children a morbid habit of conscious acquirement; and a system of recitations, examinations, and exhibitions to keep the process hot and steaming, is the thing to do it.

But I more than suspect the primitive root of the difficulty lies deeper still, and is just here: That, having grown into a secret disrelish of the old religion of our fathers, as being too objective in its nature, and too firm and solid in its objectiveness, to suit our taste, we have turned to an idolatry of intellect and knowledge; have no faith in anything, no love for anything, but what we spin, or seem to spin, out of our own minds. So in the idolatry of intellect, as in other idolatries, the marble statue with which it begins naturally comes, in process of time, to be put aside as too weighty, too expensive, and too still, and to be replaced with a hollow and worthless image all made up of paper and paint. And the cheaper and falser the idol is, the more eagerly do the devotees cut and scourge themselves in the worship of it. Hence the prating and pretentious intellectualism which we pursue with such suicidal eagerness.

I must add, that of the same family with the cant spoken of before is that other canting phrase now so rife among us

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about "the higher education." The lower education, yes, the *lower*, is what we want; and if this be duly cared for, the higher may be safely left to take care of itself. The latter will then come, and so it ought to come, of its own accord, just as fast and as far as the former finds or develops the individual aptitude for it; and the attempting to give it regardless of such aptitude can only do what it is now doing, namely, spoil a great many people for all useful handwork, without fitting them for any sort of headwork.

Of course there are some studies which may, perhaps must, proceed more or less by recitation. But, as a perpetual show of mind in the young is and can be nothing but a perpetual sham, so I am and long have been perfectly satisfied that at least three fourths of our recitations ought to be abandoned with all practicable speed, and be replaced by the better methods of our fathers, — methods that hold fast to the old law of what Dr. William B. Carpenter terms "unconscious cerebration," which is indeed the irrepealable law of all true mental growth and all right intellectual health. Nay, more; the best results of the best thinking in the best and ripest heads come under the operation of the selfsame law, — just that, and no other.

Assuredly, therefore, the need now most urgently pressing upon us is, to have vastly more of growth, and vastly less of manufacture, in our education; or, in other words, that the school be altogether more a garden, and altogether less a mill. And a garden, especially with the rich multitudinous flora of Shakespeare blooming and breathing in it, can it be, ought it to be, other than a pleasant and happy place?

> The child whose love is here at least doth reap
> One precious gain, that he forgets himself.

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# PREFACE TO THE HARVARD EDITION OF SHAKESPEARE

The most obvious peculiarity of this edition is, that it has two sets of notes; one mainly devoted to explaining the text, and printed at the foot of the page; the other mostly occupied with matters of textual comment and criticism, and printed at the end of each play.+ Of course the purpose of this double annotation is, to suit the work, as far as practicable, to the uses both of the general reader and of the special student. Now, whatever of explanation general readers may need, they naturally prefer to have it directly before them; and in at least nine cases out of ten they will pass over an obscure word or phrase or allusion without understanding it, rather than stay to look up the explanation either in another volume or in another part of the same volume. Often, too, in case the explanation be not directly at hand, they will go elsewhere in quest of it, and then find, after all, that the editor has left the matter unexplained; so that the search will be to no purpose: whereas, with the plan of footnotes, they will commonly see at once how the matter stands, and what they have to expect, and so will be spared the labor and vexation of a fruitless quest.

It scarce need be said that with special students the case is very different.+ In studying such an author as Shakespeare, these naturally expect to light upon many things for the full discussion or elucidation of which they will have to



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go beyond the page before them; though I believe even these like to have the matter within convenient reach and easy reference. At all events, they are, or well may be, much less apt to get so intent on the author's thought, and so drawn onwards by the interest of the work, but that they can readily pause, and turn elsewhere, to study out such points as may call, or seem to call, for particular investigation. In fact, general readers, for the most part, pay little or no attention to the language of what they are reading, and seldom if ever interrogate, or even think of, the words, save when the interest of the matter is choked or checked by some strangeness or obscurity of expression; whereas special students commonly are or should be carrying on a silent process of verbal interrogation, even when the matter is their chief concern: and as these are more sharp-sighted and more on the lookout for verbal difficulties than the former, so they are less impatient of the pauses required for out-of-the-way explanation.

This edition has been undertaken, and the plan of it shaped, with a special view to meeting what is believed to be a general want, and what has indeed been repeatedly urged as such within the last few years.† It has been said, and, I think, justly said, that a need is widely felt of an edition of Shakespeare, with such and so much of explanatory comment as may suffice for the state of those unlearned but sane-thoughted and earnest readers who have, or wish to have, their tastes raised and set to a higher and heartier kind of mental feeding than the literary smoke and chaff of the time. I have known many bright and upward-looking minds, — minds honestly craving to drink from the higher and purer springs of intellectual power and beauty, — who were frank to own that it was a sin and a shame not to love

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Shakespeare, but who could hardly, if at all, make that love come free and natural to them.

To be plying such minds with arguments of duty, or with thoughts of the good to be gained by standing through unpleasant taskwork, seems to me a rather ungracious and impotent business. For it has long been a settled axiom that the proper force of poetry is to please; of the highest poetry, to make wisdom and virtue pleasant, to crown the True and the Good with delight and joy.+ This is the very constituent of the poet's art; that without which it has no adequate reason for being. To clothe the austere forms of truth and wisdom with heart-taking beauty and sweetness, is its life and law. Poetry, then, ought of course to be read as poetry; and when not read with pleasure, the right grace and profit of the reading are missed. For the proper instructiveness of poetry is essentially dependent on its pleasantness; whereas in other forms of writing this order is or may be reversed. The sense or the conscience of what is morally good and right should indeed have a hand, and a prerogative hand, in shaping our pleasures; and so indeed it must be, else the pleasures will needs be transient, and even the seedtime of future pains. So right-minded people ought to desire, and do desire, to find pleasure in what is right and good; the highest pleasure in what is rightest and best: nevertheless the pleasure of the thing is what puts its healing, purifying, regenerating virtue into act; and to converse with what is in itself beautiful and good without tasting any pleasantness in it, is or may be a positive harm.

How, then, in reference to Shakespeare, is the case of common readers to be met? As before remarked, to urge reasons of duty is quite from the purpose: reading Shakespeare as duty and without pleasure is of no use, save as it

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may lift and draw them into a sense of his pleasantness. The question is, therefore, how to make him pleasant and attractive to them; how to put him before them, so that his spirit may have a fair chance to breathe into them, and quicken their congenial susceptibilities; for, surely, his soul and theirs are essentially attuned to the same music. Doubtless a full sense of his pleasantness is not to be extemporized: with most of us, nay, with the best of us, this is and must be a matter of growth: none but Shakespeare himself can educate us into a love of Shakespeare; and such education, indeed all education, is a work of time. But I must insist upon it, that his works can and should be so edited, that average readers may find enough of pleasantness in them from the first to hold them to the perusal: and when they have been so held long enough for the workmanship to steal its virtue and sweetness into them, then they will be naturally and freely carried onwards to the condition where "love is an unerring light, and joy its own security."

These remarks, I believe, indicate, as well as I know how to do, my idea — I can hardly say, I dare not say, my ideal — of what a popular edition of Shakespeare ought to be.+ The editorial parts should, as far as possible, be so cast and tempered and ordered as to make the Poet's pages pleasant and attractive to common minds. Generally to such minds, and often even to uncommon minds, Shakespeare's world may well seem at first a strange world, — strange not only for the spiritualized realism of it, but because it is so much more deeply and truly natural than the book world to which they have been accustomed. The strangeness of the place, together with the difficulty they find in clearly seeing the real forms and relations of the objects before them, is apt to render the place unattractive, if not positively repulsive, to them.

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The place is so emphatically the native home of both the soul and the senses, that they feel lost in it; and this because they have so long traveled in literary regions where the soul and the senses have been trained into an estrangement from their proper home. It is like coming back to realities after having strayed among shadows till the shadows have come to seem realities.

Not seldom the very naturalness of Shakespeare's world frightens unaccustomed readers: they find, or feel, so to speak, a kind of estranged familiarity about it, as of a place they have once known, but have lost the memory of; so that it seems to them a land peopled with the ghosts of what had long ago been to them real living things. Thus the effect, for some time, is rather to scare and chill their interest than to kindle and heighten it. And the Poet is continually popping his thoughts upon them so pointedly, so vividly, so directly, so unceremoniously, that their sensibilities are startled, and would fain shrink back within the shell of custom; so different is it from the pulpy, pointless, euphemistic roundaboutness and volubility which they have been used to hearing from the pulpit, the press, the vulgar oratory, and the popular authorship of the day. Therewithal, the Poet often springs upon them such abrupt and searching revelations of their inner selves, so stings them with his truth, so wounds them with his healing, and causes such an undreamed-of birth of thoughts and feelings within them, that they stare about them with a certain dread and shudder, and "tremble like a guilty thing surprised," as in the presence of a magician that has stolen their inmost secrets from them, and is showing them up to the world.†

But this is not all. Besides the unfamiliarity of Shakespeare's matter, so many and so great lingual changes have

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taken place since his time, and, still more, his manner both of thought and expression is so intensely idiomatic, his diction so suggestive and overcharged with meaning, his imagery so strong and bold, his sense so subtle and delicate, his modulation so various and of such solid and piercing sweetness, that common readers naturally have no little difficulty in coming to an easy and familiar converse with him. On some of these points, an editor can give little or no positive help: he can at the best but remove or lessen hindrances, and perhaps throw in now and then a kindling word or breath. But, on others of them, it lies within an editor's province to render all the positive aid that common readers need for making them intelligently and even delightedly at home with the Poet.

Of course this is to be mostly done by furnishing such and so much of comment and citation as may be required for setting the Poet's meaning out clear and free, and by translating strange or unfamiliar words, phrases, and modes of speech into the plain, current language of the day. And here it is of the first importance that an editor have the mind, or the art, not only to see things plainly, but to say a plain thing in a plain way; or, in the happy phrase of old Roger Ascham, to "think as wise men do, and speak as common people do."† And the secret of right editing is, to help average readers over the author's difficulties with as little sense as possible of being helped; to lead them up his heights and through his depths with as little sense as possible of being led. To do this, the editor must have such a kind and measure of learning in the field of his labor as can come only by many years of careful study and thought; and he must keep the details and processes of his learning out of sight, putting forth only the last and highest results, the blossom and fragrance,

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of his learnedness: and the editor who does not know too much in his subject to be showing his knowledge is green and crude, and so far unfitted for his task. Generally speaking, it is doubtless better to withhold a needed explanation than to offer a needless one; because the latter looks as if the editor were intent on thrusting himself between the author and the reader.

Probably we all understand that the best style in writing is where average minds, on reading it, are prompted to say, "Why, almost anybody could have done that"; and a style that is continually making such readers sensible of their ignorance, or of their inferiority to the writer, is not good. For the proper light of a truly luminous speaker is one that strikes up a kindred light in the hearer; so that the light seems to come, and indeed really does come, from the hearer's own mind. It is much the same in editing a standard author for common use. And for an editor to be all the while, or often, putting average readers in mind how ignorant and inferior they are, is not the best way, nor the right way, to help them.

But what seems specially needful to be kept in mind is, that when common people read Shakespeare, it is not to learn etymology, or grammar, or philology, or lingual antiquities, or criticism, or the technicalties of scholarism, but to learn Shakespeare himself; to understand the things he puts before them, to take in his thought, to taste his wisdom, to feel his beauty, to be kindled by his fire, to be refreshed with his humor, to glow with his rapture, and to be stolen from themselves and transported into his moral and intellectual whereabout; in a word, to live, breathe, think, and feel with him. I am so simple and old-fashioned as to hold that, in so reading the Poet, they are putting him to the very best

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and highest use of which he is capable. Even their intellects, I think, will thrive far better so, than by straining themselves to a course of mere intellectualism. All which means, to be sure, that far more real good will come, even to the mind, by foolishly enjoying Shakespeare than by learnedly parsing him. So that here I am minded to apply the saying of Wordsworth, that "he is oft the wisest man who is not wise at all."

Now I cannot choose but think that, if this were always duly borne in mind, we should see much more economy of erudition than we do. It is the instinct of a crude or conceited learning to be ever emphasizing itself, and poking its fingers into the readers' eyes: but a ripe and well-assimilated learning does not act thus: it is a fine spirit working in the mind's blood, and not a sort of foam or scum mantling its surface, or an outgrowth bristling into notice.+ So that here, as in all true strength, modesty rules the transpiration. Accordingly an editor's proper art is to proceed, not by a formal and conscious use of learning, but by the silent efficacy thereof transfusing itself insensibly into and through his work, so as to accomplish its purpose without being directly seen.

Nor is Shakespeare's language so antiquated, or his idiom of thought so remote from ordinary apprehension, as to require a minute, or cumbrous, or oppressive erudition for making his thoughts intelligible to average minds. His diction, after all, is much nearer the common vernacular of the day than that of his editors: for where would these be if they did not write in a *learned* style? To be sure, here, as elsewhere, an editor's art, or want of art, can easily find or make ever so many difficulties, in order to magnify itself and its office by meeting them, or by seeming to meet them.

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And in fact it has now become, or is fast becoming, very much the fashion to treat Shakespeare in this way; an elaborate and self-conscious erudition using him as a sort of perch to flap its wings and crow from. So we have had and are having editions of his plays designed for common use, wherein the sunlight of his poetry is so muffled and strangled by a thick haze of minute, technical, and dictionary learning, that common eyes can hardly catch any fresh and clear beams of it. Small points and issues almost numberless, and many of them running clean off into distant tenth-cousin matters, are raised, as if poetry so vital and organic as his, and with its mouth so full of soul music, were but a subject for lingual and grammatical dissection; or a thing to be studied through a microscope, and so to be "examined, ponder'd, search'd, probed, vex'd, and criticised."+ Is not all this very much as if the main business of readers, with Shakespeare's page before them, were to "pore, and dwindle as they pore"?

Here the ruling thought seems to be, that the chief profit of studying Shakespeare is to come by analyzing and parsing his sentences, not by understanding and enjoying his poetry. But, assuredly, this is not the way to aid and encourage people in the study of Shakespeare. They are not to be inspired with a right love or taste for him by having his lines encumbered with such commentatorial redundances and irrelevancies. Rather say, such a course naturally renders the Poet an unmitigable bore to them, and can hardly fail to disgust and repel them; unless, perchance, it may superinduce upon them a certain dry rot of formalistic learning. For, in a vast many cases, the explanations are far more obscure to the average reader than the things explained; and he may well despair of understanding the

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Poet, when he so often finds it impossible to understand his explainers. Or the effect of such a course, if it have any but a negative effect, can hardly be other than to tease and card the common sense out of people, and train them into learned and prating dunces, instead of making them intelligent, thoughtful, happy men and women in the ordinary tasks, duties, and concerns of life.

Thus Shakespeare is now in a fair way to undergo the same fate which a much greater and better book has already undergone.+ For even so a great many learned minds, instead of duly marking how little need be said, and how simply that little should be said, have tried, apparently, how much and how learnedly they could write upon the Bible; how many nice questions they could raise, and what elaborate comments they could weave about its contents. Take, for example, the Sermon on the Mount: left to its natural and proper working, that brief piece of writing has in it more of true culture-force or culture-inspiration than all the mere scientific books in the world put together: and learned commentaries stand, or claim to stand, in the rank of scientific works. Yet even here, as experience has amply proved, a sort of learned incontinence can easily so intricate and perplex the matter, and spin the sense out into such a curious and voluminous interpretation, as fairly to swamp plain minds, and put them quite at a loss as to what the Divine utterances mean. The thing is clear enough, until a garrulous and obtrusive learning takes it in hand; and then darkness begins to gather round it.

And so the Bible generally, as we all know, has been so worried and belabored with erudite, or ignorant, but at all events diffusive, long-winded, and obstructive commentary; its teachings and efficacies have got so strangled by the

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interminable yarns of interpretation spun about them; that now at length common people have pretty much lost both their faith in it and their taste for it: reverence for it has come to be regarded as little better than an exploded superstition: and indeed its light can hardly struggle or filtrate through the dense vapors of learned and elaborate verbosity exhaled from subjacent regions. The tendency now is to replace the Bible with Shakespeare as our master code of practical wisdom and guidance. I am far, very far indeed, from regarding this as a sign of progress, either moral or intellectual: viewed merely in reference to literary taste, the Bible is incomparably beyond any other book in the world: but, if such a substitution must be made, Shakespeare is probably the best. The Poet himself tells us, "they that dally nicely with words may quickly make them wanton." And so, to be sure, the process has set in, and is already well advanced, of smothering his proper light beneath commentatorial surplusage and rubbish.

So strong is the conceit of studying all things scientifically, that we must, forsooth, have Shakespeare used as the raw material of scientific manufacture. It seems to be presumed that people cannot rightly feed upon his poetry, unless it be first digested for them into systematic shape by passing through some gerund-grinding laboratory.† But the plain truth is, that works of imagination cannot be mechanized and done over into the forms of science, without a total dissipation of their life and spirit, of all indeed that is properly constitutive in them. It is simply like dissecting a bird in order to find out where the music comes from and how it is made.

I have, perhaps, dwelt upon this topic too long, and may fitly close it with a few pertinent words from Bacon, which

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always come into my remembrance when thinking on the subject. "The first distemper of learning," says he, "is when men study words and not matter. And how is it possible but this should have an operation to discredit learning, even with vulgar capacities, when they see learned men's works like the first letter of a patent, or a limned book; which, though it hath large flourishes, yet is but a letter? It seems to me that Pygmalion's frenzy is a good emblem or portraiture of this vanity: for words are but the images of matter; and, except they have the life of reason and invention, to fall in love with them is all one as to fall in love with a picture." In another passage, he puts the matter as follows: "Surely, like as many substances in Nature which are solid do putrefy and corrupt into worms; so it is the property of good and sound knowledge to putrefy and dissolve into a number of subtile, idle, unwholesome, and (as I may term them) vermiculate questions, which have indeed a kind of quickness and life of spirit, but no soundness of matter or goodness of quality."

To preclude misapprehension, as far as may be, I must add that the foregoing remarks have an eye only to editions of the Poet designed for common use; and so cannot be justly construed as reflecting on such as look mainly to the special use of students and scholars. Doubtless there may be, nay, there must be, from time to time, say as often as once in forty or fifty years, highly learned editions of Shakespeare; such, for instance, as Mr. Howard Furness's magnificent *Variorum*, which, so far as it has come, is a truly monumental achievement of learning, judgment, good sense, and conscientious, painstaking industry.+ Of course such a work must needs enter very largely into the details and processes of the subject, pursuing a great many points out

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through all the subtilties and intricacies of critical inquiry. But, for the generality of readers, such a handling of the theme is obviously quite out of the question: in this hard working-day world, they have too much else in hand to be tracing out and sifting the nice questions which it is the business of a profound and varied scholarship to investigate and settle; and the last and highest results of such scholarship is all that they can possibly have time or taste for. If any one says that common readers, such as at least ninety-nine persons in a hundred are and must be, should have the details and processes of the work put before them, that so they may be enabled to form independent judgments for themselves; — I say, whoever talks in this way is either under a delusion himself, or else means to delude others. It may flatter common readers to be told that they are just as competent to judge for themselves in these matters as those who have made a lifelong study of them: but the plain truth is, that such readers must perforce either take the results of deep scholarship on trust, or else not have them at all; and none but a dupe or a quack, or perhaps a compound of the two, would ever think of representing the matter otherwise.

But the main business of this Preface is yet to come, and what remains must be chiefly occupied with certain questions touching the Poet's text. And here I must first make a brief general statement of the condition in which his text has come down to us, leaving the particular details in this kind to be noted in connection with the several plays themselves.

Of the thirty-eight plays included in this edition, sixteen, or, if we count in the originals of the Second and Third

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Parts of *King Henry the Sixth*, eighteen, were published, severally and successively, in what are known as the quarto editions, during the Poet's life. Some of them were printed in that form several times, but often with considerable variations of text. One more, *Othello*, was issued in that form in 1622, six years after the Poet's death. Copies of these editions are still extant, though in some cases exceedingly rare.+ Most of these issues were undoubtedly "stolen and surreptitious"; and it is nowise likely that in any of them a single page of the proofs was ever corrected by Shakespeare himself. In the popular literature of his time, proof reading generally was done, if done at all, with such a degree of slovenliness as no one would think of tolerating now. And that proof sheets can be rightly and properly corrected by none but the author himself, or by one very closely and minutely familiar with his mind, his mouth, and his hand, is a lesson which an experience of more than thirty years in the matter has taught me beyond all peradventure. And, in fact, the printing in most of these quarto issues is so shockingly bad, that no one can gain an adequate idea of how bad it is, except by minutely studying the text as there given, and comparing it in detail with the text as given in modern editions.

All the forecited plays, with one exception, *Pericles*, were set forth anew in the celebrated folio of 1623,+ seven years after the Poet's death. Most of them are indeed printed much better there than in the earlier issues, though some of them are well known to have been printed from quarto copies. Therewithal the folio set forth, for the first time, so far as is known, all the other plays included in this edition, except *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. The volume was published, professedly at least, under the editorial care of the

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Poet's friends and fellow-actors, John Heminge and Henry Condell.

The printing of the folio is exceedingly unequal: in some of the plays, as, for instance, *Julius Cæsar*, *Twelfth Night*, and *As You Like It*, it is remarkably good for the time, insomuch that the text, generally, is got into an orderly and intelligible state without much trouble; while others, as *All's Well*, *Coriolanus*, and *Timon of Athens*, abound in the grossest textual corruptions, so that the labor of rectification seems to be literally endless. Even where the printing is best, there are still so many palpable, and also so many more or less probable, misprints, that the text, do the best we can with it, must often stand under considerable uncertainty. It is not unlikely that in some parts of the volume the editors themselves may have attended somewhat to the correcting of the proofs, while in others they left it entirely to the printers. Of course all the plays then first published must have been printed either from the author's own manuscripts, or else from playhouse transcripts of them. Doubtless these were made by different hands, sometimes with reasonable care, sometimes otherwise, and so with widely varying degrees of accuracy and legibility.

In their "Address to the Readers," the editors, after referring to the earlier quarto issues, go on as follows:[+] "Even those are now offered to your view cured and perfect of their limbs, and all the rest absolute in their numbers as he [the author] conceived them; who, as he was a happy imitator of Nature, was a most gentle expresser of it: and what he thought, he uttered with that easiness, that we have scarce received from him a blot in his papers." Heminge and Condell appear to have been honest and amiable men; but they naturally felt a strong interest in having the volume

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sell well, and so were moved to recommend it as highly as they could to purchasers. Probably there was something of truth in what they said, perhaps enough to excuse, if not to justify them in saying it: nevertheless it is perfectly certain that their words were not true to the full extent; and most likely what was true only of a portion of the volume they deemed it right to put forth in a general way as if applicable to the whole, without staying to express any limitations or exceptions. The folio was reprinted in 1632, again in 1664, and yet again in 1685.+ The folio of 1632 was set forth with a good many textual changes, made by an unknown hand; sometimes corrections, and sometimes corruptions, but none of them carrying any authority. Changes of text, though less both in number and importance, were also made in the third and fourth folios.

Before passing on from this topic, I must add that, after 1623, single plays continued to be reprinted, from time to time, in quarto form. But as these are seldom of any use towards ascertaining or helping the text, it seems not worth the while to specify them in detail. Probably the most valuable of them is that of *Othello*, issued in 1630. Others of them are occasionally referred to in the Critical Notes.

As I have frequent occasion to cite a famous volume which I designate as "Collier's second folio," + it appears needful to give some account thereof in this place. — In 1849, Mr. J. P. Collier, a very learned and eminent Shakespearean, lighted upon and purchased a copy of the second folio containing a very large number of verbal, literal, and punctuative alterations in manuscript; all of course intended as corrections of the text. At what time or times, and by what hand or hands, these changes were made, has not been settled, nor is likely to be. For some time there was a good

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deal of pretty warm controversy about them. All, I believe, are now pretty much agreed, and certainly such is my own judgment, that none of them have any claim to be regarded as authentic: most of them are corruptions decidedly; but a considerable number may be justly spoken of as corrections; and some of them are exceedingly happy and valuable. To be sure, of those that may be called apt and good, the larger portion had been anticipated by modern editors, and so had passed into the current text. Still there are enough of original or unanticipated corrections to render the volume an important contribution towards textual rectification. Nevertheless they all stand on the common footing of conjectural emendation, and so carry no authority in their hand but that of inherent fitness and propriety.

Herewith I must also mention another copy of the same folio, which is sometimes referred to in my Critical Notes. This was owned by the late Mr. S. W. Singer, also one of the most learned and eminent Shakespeareans of his time. All that need be said of it here may as well be given in Singer's own words: "In June, 1852, I purchased from Mr. Willis, the bookseller, a copy of the second folio edition of Shakespeare, in its original binding, which, like that of Mr. Collier, contains very numerous manuscript corrections by several hands: the typographical errors, with which that edition abounds, are sedulously corrected, and the writers have also tried their hands at conjectural emendation extensively. Many of these emendations correspond to those in Mr. Collier's volume, but chiefly in those cases where the error in the old copy was pretty evident; but the readings often vary, and sometimes for the better."

Thus much may suffice for indicating generally the condition in which Shakespeare's plays have come down to us.

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Of course the early quartos and the first folio are, in the proper sense, our only authorities for the Poet's text. But his text has not been, and most assuredly never will be allowed to remain in the condition there given. The labors and the judgment of learned, sagacious, painstaking, diligent workmen in the field have had, ought to have, must have, a good deal of weight in deciding how the matter should go.+ And now the question confronts us whether, after all, there is any likelihood of Shakespeare's text being ever got into a satisfactory state. Perhaps, nay, I may as well say probably, not. Probably the best to be looked for here is a greater or less degree of approximation to such a state. At all events, if it come at all, it is to come as the slow cumulative result of a great many minds working jointly, or severally, and successively, and each contributing its measure, be it more, be it less, towards the common cause. A mite done here, and a mite done there, will at length, when time shall cast up the sum, accomplish we know not what.

The Bible apart, Shakespeare's dramas are, by general consent, the greatest classic and literary treasure of the world. His text, with all the admitted imperfections on its head, is nevertheless a venerable and sacred thing, and must nowise be touched but under a strong restraining sense of pious awe.+ Woe to the man that exercises his critical surgery here without a profound reverence for the subject! All glib ingenuity, all shifty cleverness, should be sternly warned off from meddling with the matter. Nothing is easier than making or proposing ingenious and plausible corrections. But changes merely ingenious are altogether worse than none; and whoever goes about the work with his mind at all in trim for it will much rather have any corrections he may make or propose flatly condemned as bad,

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than have that *sweetish* epithet politely smiled, or *sneered*, upon them. On the other hand, to make corrections that are really judicious, corrections that have due respect to all sides of the case, and fit all round, and that keep strictly within the limits of such freedom as must be permitted in the presenting of so great a classic so deeply hurt with textual corruptions; — this is, indeed, just the nicest and most delicate art in the whole work of modern editorship. And as a due application of this art requires a most circumspective and discriminating judgment, together with a lifelong acquaintance with the Poet's mental and rhythmic and lingual idiom; so, again, there needs no small measure of the same preparation, in order to a judicious estimate of any ripely considered textual change.

The work of ascertaining and amending Shakespeare's text systematically began with Rowe in 1709,+ his first edition having come out that year, his second in 1714. The work was continued by Pope, who also put forth two editions, in 1725 and 1728.+ Pope was followed by Theobald,+ whose two editions appeared in 1733 and 1740. Then came Hanmer's edition in 1744,+ and Warburton's in 1747.+ All through the latter half of the eighteenth century the process was sedulously continued by Johnson,+ Capell,+ Steevens,+ Malone,+ and sundry others. Heath, though not an editor, was hardly inferior to any of them in understanding and judgment; and his comments remain to this day among the best we have. Most of these men were very strong and broad in learning and sagacity, and in the other furnishings needful for their task; none of them were wanting in respect for the Poet; and all of them did good service.

It must be admitted, however, that many, if not most, of these workmen handled the text with excessive freedom;

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and perhaps it may be justly said that, taken all together, they corrupted quite as much as they corrected it. They seem to have gone somewhat upon the principle of giving what, in their judgment, the Poet ought to have written; whereas the thing we want is not what anybody may think he ought to have written, but what, as nearly as can be judged, he actually did write. Accordingly much labor has since had to be spent in undoing what was thus overdone.

During the present century the process of correction has been kept up, but much more temperately, and by minds well fitted and furnished for the task, though probably, as a whole, not equal to the earlier series of workmen. Among these are Singer, Collier, Dyce, Staunton, Halliwell, and White, faithful and highly competent laborers, whose names will doubtless hold prominent and permanent places in Shakespearean lore.

The excessive freedom in textual change used by the earlier series of editors has naturally had the effect of provoking a reaction. For the last forty years or thereabouts, this reaction has been in progress, and is now, I think, at its height, having reached an extreme fully as great, and not a whit more commendable than the former extreme. Of course this can hardly fail in due time to draw on another reaction; and already signs are not wanting that such a result is surely forthcoming. To the former license of correction there has succeeded a license, not less vicious, of interpretation. Explanations the most strained, far-fetched, and oversubtile are now very much the order of the day, — things sure to disgust the common sense of sober, candid, circumspective, cool-judging minds. It is said that the old text must not be changed save in cases of "absolute necessity"; and this dictum is so construed, in theory at least,

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as to prompt and cover all the excesses of the most fanciful, fine-drawn, and futile ingenuity. The thing has grown to the ridiculous upshot of glozing and belauding printers' errors into poetic beauties, and the awkwardest hitchings and haltings of meter into "elegant retardations." To minds so captivated with their own ingenuity, an item of the old text that is utter nonsense is specially attractive; because, to be sure, they can the more easily spell their own sense, or want of sense, into it. And so we see them doggedly tenacious of such readings as none but themselves can explain, and fondly concocting such explanations thereof as none but themselves can understand; tormenting the meaning they want out of words that are no more akin to it than the multiplication table is to a trilobite. Surely, then, the thing now most in order is a course of temperance and moderation, a calmness and equipoise of judgment, steering clear of both extremes, and sounding in harmony with plain old common sense, one ounce of which is worth more than a ton of exegetical ingenuity. For Shakespeare, be it observed, is just our great imperial sovereign of common sense; and sooner or later the study of him will needs kill off all the editors that run in discord with this supreme quality of his workmanship.

The present generation of Shakespeareans are rather conspicuously, not to say ostentatiously, innocent of respect for their predecessors. They even seem to measure the worth of their own doings by their self-complacent ignoring or upbraiding of what has been done before. Might it not be well for them to bethink themselves now and then what sort of a lesson their contempt of the past is likely to teach the future? Possibly plain sensible people, who prefer small perspicuities to big obscurities, soft-voiced solidities to

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high-sounding nihilities, may take it into their heads that wisdom was not born with the present generation, and will not die with it. After all, Rowe, Pope, Theobald, Hanmer, Warburton, Johnson, Capell, and others, though by no means infallible, yet were not fools: they knew several things; and their minds were at least tolerably clear of conceit and cant: I suspect they understood their business quite as well, and labored in it quite as uprightly and fruitfully, as those who now insist on proceeding as if nothing had ever been done; as if it had been reserved exclusively for them to understand and appreciate the Poet. In this, as in some other matters, to "stand as if a man were author of himself, and knew no other kin," is not exactly the thing. The best that any of us can do is to add somewhat, perhaps a very, very little, to the building that others have worked upon and helped to rear; and, if we are to begin by a clean sweeping away of what others have done, that so our puny architecture may have a better chance of being seen, is it not possible that the sum of our own doings, as time shall foot it up, will prove a minus quantity?

Certainly changes in the old text of Shakespeare ought not to be made without strong and clear reasons: and, after they have been so made, stronger and clearer reasons may arise, or may be shown, for unmaking them.+ Very well; be it so. But such reasons are not to be nonsuited by unreasonable explanations, by superfine glozings, and rhetorical smokings. The *cacoëthes emendandi* and the *cacoëthes explanandi* are alike out of place, and to be avoided. I have already quoted the phrase "absolute necessity," now so often used by the ultraists of textual conservatism. This phrase seems to bind the thing up very tightly: yet, even with those who urge it most strongly, it is found

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to have, in effect, no firm practical meaning; at least not a whit more than the phrase "strong and clear reasons." To illustrate what I mean:

Mr. Furness, in his *King Lear*, III, vi, prints "This rest might yet have balm'd thy broken *sinews*"; thus rejecting Theobald's reading, "broken *senses*," for the old text: and he does this on the ground that "the change is not absolutely necessary." Yet, in II, iv, he prints "To be a comrade of the wolf, and *howl* necessity's sharp pinch!" thus substituting *howl*, from Collier's second folio, for *owl*, the old reading. And I think he shows strong and clear reasons for the change. But, strictly speaking, I can see no absolute necessity for it: some tolerable sense can be made, has been made, out of the old text. Nay, more; the change, in this case, as it seems to me, does not come so near being absolutely necessary as in the case of Theobald's *senses*. I must needs think that *owl* yields, of the two, a better and more fitting sense in the one place than *sinews* does in the other. Nevertheless, in the instance of *howl*, Mr. Furness seems to me to make out a clear case; to justify the change triumphantly; this too without any approach to overstrained refinement; insomuch that I should henceforth never think of printing the passage otherwise than as he prints it. So, be it that absolute necessity is the true rule, have we not here a pretty good instance of that rule being "more hon- or'd in the breach than the observance"?

And I think the same argument will hold even more strongly touching another reading which he adopts from the same source. It is in I, i, where he prints "It is no vicious blot, *nor other* foulness," instead of the old reading, "no vicious blot, *murther, or* foulness." Here the need of the change, to my thinking, is not so exigent nor so evident as

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in either of the former cases, especially the first: a good deal, I think, can here be said in defense of the old reading: at all events, I can nowise understand how the absolute necessity that rules out *senses* can consistently rule in *howl* and *nor other*. But Mr. Furness, with all his austere and, as I must think, rather overstrained conservatism, so commands my respect, that I accept his judgment in both the latter cases, though dissenting from him altogether in the first; herein following, as I take it, the absolute necessity which he practices, and not the one which he preaches. And indeed so many men preach better than they practice, that it is decidedly refreshing to meet, now and then, with one who reverses this order, and makes his practice come out ahead.

Of course this point might easily be illustrated at almost any length. For the old text has hundreds of cases substantially parallel with those I have cited; cases where, in my judgment, there are strong and clear reasons for textual changes made or proposed by former Shakespeareans, but where the new school, with their canon of "absolute necessity," hold on to stark corruptions, and then make up for their textual strictness with the largest exegetical license. Yet I have never caught any of these bigots (so I must term them) of the old letter finding fault when we, of a somewhat more liberal bent, have adopted any corrections which they have themselves proposed. Here, as, to be sure, is very natural, their "absolute necessity" smiles itself into an aspect practicable enough.

For, in truth, several of them seem equally intent on finding reasons for condemning corrections that others have made, and for proposing or approving new corrections; and their wrong-headed, perhaps I should say pig-headed, ingenuity in both parts of the business is sometimes ludicrous,

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sometimes otherwise. So, for instance, one of them has lately approved, and another adopted, a new reading in *The Tempest*, I, ii: "Urchins shall *forth at* vast of night, that they may work all exercise on thee"; where both the old and the common reading is, "Urchins shall, *for that* vast of night that they may work, all exercise on thee." Here, of course, *for* gives the sense of duration, or prolonged action; which is just what the occasion requires. For it is well known that urchins were wont to go forth, and work, or play, during the vast of night, anyhow; this was their special right or privilege; and Prospero means that, during that time, he will have them exercise their talents on Caliban. In my poor opinion, therefore, both the approver and the adopter of the forecited change have thereby, so far as one instance can tell against them, earned an exclusion, or a dismissal, from the seat of judgment in questions of that sort. However, when any of these gentlemen offer us, as they sometimes do, corrections that can show strong and clear reasons, I, for one, shall be happy to prefer their practice also to their preaching; and, if they see fit to frown their preaching upon me, I have but to laugh back their own practice upon them: so, if they can stand it, I can.

But there is one thing which I feel bound to set my face against, however insignificant that setting may be. It is this. Of course there are a great many plain cases of textual corruption, where, notwithstanding, a full and perfect certainty as to the right correction is not to be attained. These often try an editor's labor and judgment and patience to the uttermost. But it is an editor's business, in such cases, to sift and weigh the whole matter with all possible care, to make up his mind, and do the best he can. This is a tedious and painful, as also, in most cases, a thankless process.

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So a custom has lately been started, for editors, when on this score any "doubts or scruples tease the brain," to shirk the whole matter, to shift off the burden upon others, and to dodge all responsibility and all hazard of a wrong decision, by sticking an obelus in to note the corruption; thus calling the reader's attention to his need of help, and yet leaving him utterly unhelped. This is indeed "most tolerable and not to be endured." It is, in effect, equivalent to telling us that they know more than all the previous editors, yet do not know enough for the cause they have undertaken, and so have no way but to adjourn the court.

There is one other topic upon which I must say a few words. — It is somewhat in question how far the spelling and the verbal forms of the old copies ought to be retained. Mr. White, following the folio, prints *murther* for *murder*, *fadom* for *fathom*, and in some cases, if I rightly remember, *moder* for *mother*. Now there seems to me just as much reason for keeping the two latter archaisms as for keeping the first; that is to say, none at all. Herein, however, Mr. White is at least consistent; which is more than can be said of some other recent editing; though I admit that in this instance consistency is not a jewel. And Mr. Furness, in the Preface to his *King Lear*, announces that hereafter he shall adhere to the old form, or old spelling, of *then* for *than*, as also of the antique concessive *and* for *an*. In an edition like his, designed chiefly for students and scholars, there may be some reason for this which does not hold in the case of editions looking to general use; yet even that appears to me somewhat more than doubtful. Mr. Furness urges that Spenser always uses *then* for *than*, and that none of his modern editors think of substituting the latter. But Spenser

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manifestly took pains to give his language a special air or smack of antiquity, and so made it more archaic than the general usage of his time. Moreover, Spenser is now very little read, if at all, save by scholars and students; and, if I were to edit any portion of him for common use, I should make no scruple of printing *than*, except in cases where *then* might need be kept for the rhyme. It may be well to add, that in the original editions of Hooker's great work *than* is, I think, always spelled *then*: nevertheless the late Mr. Keble, in his edition, uniformly prints *than*; and I suspect it will be a good while before we shall see any better specimen of editorial workmanship than Keble's Hooker.

Again: All students of Shakespeare know that the folio has many instances of *God buy you*, the old colloquial abridgment of *God be with you*, which has been still further shortened into our *Good bye*. Probably, in the Poet's time, the phrase was sounded *God bwy you*. Here I see no other, or no better, way to keep both sense and sound, and rhythm also, than by printing *God b' wi' you*; and so in this edition I always print, or mean to print. Would Mr. Furness, in this instance also, retain the old form or spelling *buy*? The phrase, I believe, does not occur in *King Lear*, so that he had no occasion there for making any sign of his thought on the subject. The phrase occurs repeatedly in *Hamlet*, once in II, i, and again in II, ii; and there he prints "God be wi' you" and "God be wi' ye"; but on some points his views have changed since his superb edition of that play was issued. Whatever his purpose may be, I cannot but think there is quite as good reason for adhering strictly to the old letter in this instance as in that of *then* or of *and*. And the case is substantially the same in reference to a great many other words: in fact, I do not see how this principle of

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retention can consistently stop, till it shall have restored the old spelling altogether.

My own practice in this matter is, wherever anything either of sense, or of rhythm, or of meter, or of rhyme, is involved, to retain the old forms or old spelling. For instance, the folio has *eyne* for *eyes*, and rhyming with *mine;* also *denay* for *deniai*, and rhyming with *say:* it also has *throughly* for *thoroughly*, and *thorough* for *through*. Of course I should never think, probably no editor would think, of disturbing these archaisms, or such as these. Even when, as is often the case, there is no reason of meter or of rhyme for keeping them, they are essential items in the Poet's rhythm; for good prose has a rhythm of its own as well as verse. Now, Shakespeare, especially in his verse, was evidently very particular and exact in the care of his rhythm and meter, and therefore of his syllables. The folio has almost numberless minute proofs and indications of this; and here, of course, the smaller the note, the more significance it bears as regards the Poet's habit and purpose. Perhaps there is no point wherein this is oftener shown than in his very frequent elision of the article *the*, so as to make it coalesce with the preceding word into one syllable. So, especially in his later plays, there is almost no end to such elisions as *by th'*, *do th'*, *for th'*, *from th'*, *on th'*, *to th'*, etc.; and the folio has many instances of the double elision *wi' th'* for *with the*. Now, I hold, and have long held, it important that, as far as practicable, these little things be carefully preserved, not only because they are essential parts of the Poet's verbal modulation, but also as significant notes or registers of his scrupulous and delicate attention to this element of his workmanship. Yet the whole thing is totally ignored in all the recent editions that I am conversant with; all, with

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the one exception of Mr. Furness's latest volume, his *King Lear*, where it is carefully attended to.† And right glad am I that it is; for, as I must think, it ought never to have been neglected.

But, in certain other points, — points where nothing of rhyme or meter or rhythm or sense is concerned, — I have pursued, and shall pursue, a somewhat different course. — It is well known to Shakespeareans that the old text has some twelve or fifteen, perhaps more, instances of *it* used possessively, or where we should use *its*, the latter not being a current form in the Poet's time, though then just creeping into use. And so the English Bible as originally printed in 1611, has not a single instance of *its:* it has, however, one or two, perhaps more, instances of *it* used in the same way. In these cases, all modern editions, so far as I know, print *its*, and are, I hold, unquestionably right in doing so. It is true, Shakespeare's old text has repeated instances of *its*, and these are more frequent in the later plays than in the earlier. And in most of these cases the folio prints it with an apostrophe, *it's;* though in two or three places, if not more, we there have it printed without the apostrophe.

In all these cases, whether of *it* or *it's* or *its*, I make no scruple whatever of printing simply *its;* though I sometimes call attention to the old usage in my Critical Notes. For, in truth, I can perceive no sort of sense or reason in retaining the possessive *it* in Shakespeare's text, or, at all events, in any presentation of it designed for common use. Yet we have some recent editing apparently taking no little credit to itself for keeping up and propagating this unmeaning and worthless bit of archaic usage; whereas the Poet himself was evidently impatient of it, as he shook himself more and more free from it, the riper he grew. Of course the

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same recent editing insists punctually on keeping the apostrophized form, *it's*, wherever the folio prints it so. Surely there is no more reason for retaining the apostrophe here than there is for omitting it in the numberless cases where the folio omits it; as in "like my brothers fault," and "against my brothers life." For all who have so much as looked into that volume must know that genitives and plurals are there commonly printed just alike.

And now a word as to the ordering of the plays in this edition.+ The folio has them arranged in three distinct series, severally entitled Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies. The plays of the first and third series are there arranged seemingly at haphazard, and without any regard to the order of time in which they were written; those of the second or historic series, simply according to the chronological order of the persons and events represented in them; the three that were no doubt written first being thus placed after several that were of later composition. In this edition, the three series of the folio are kept distinct; but the several plays of each series are meant to be arranged, as nearly as may be, according to the chronological order of the writing. This is done merely because such appears to be the most natural and fitting principle of arrangement, and not that the Poet may be read or studied "historically"; a matter which is made a good deal of by some, but which, as it seems to me, is really of no practical consequence whatever.+ Nor is it claimed that the actual order of the writing is precisely followed in every particular: in fact, this order has not yet been fully settled, and probably never will be; though, to be sure, something considerable has been done towards such settlement within the last few years.

CAMBRIDGE, August 2, 1880

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To my original Preface I am now moved to add, from a high authority, the following paragraphs in corroboration of certain points therein taken. When writing that Preface, I either had not read, or had quite forgotten, the matter in question, else I should have made some use of it then. It is from Dr. C. M. Ingleby's book entitled *A Complete View of the Shakespeare Controversy*, 1861: "It is unfortunately true that in an enormous number of instances the text of Shakespeare, whether we find it in the quartos or the folio, is in such an abominably corrupt state, that emendation is a necessity, and must be acknowledged to be so even by those who regard it as an evil, and would never allow it where *any kind of sense* can be tortured out of the original words. Innumerable are the phrases out of which no possible sense can be tortured, by any kind of exegetical maneuver. Every editor has his own favorite nostrums for many of these: but some cases are so hopeless, that it is an almost universal custom for editors to print the nonsense of the original text, in sheer despair of superseding it by any plausible emendations. Of these almost hopeless *cruces* the number does not exceed twenty-five. In some the difficulty lies in the construction of the sentence; in others, in the use of words which have not, and probably never had, any meaning. But these form but a drop in the 'multitudinous seas' of misprints with which the text of quartos and folios are alike overwhelmed. In fact, it is not going too far to affirm the very reverse of Professor Craik's *dictum*, and aver that the first folio edition of Shakespeare is the worst-printed work, of any pretensions to permanent interest, dramatic or otherwise, that the first half of the seventeenth century produced.

"Accordingly, the editors and conjectural critics of the two editions *cum notis variorum* not unnaturally fell into the extreme of loose conjecture; they were more anxious to

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reform than to understand: and the editions of our own day afford abundant evidence of a reaction upon that laxness of criticism, and almost universally err in the extreme of a too close adherence to the old copies. Against this blind deference to the printed authorities, the following protest of Mr. W. N. Lettsom cannot be too often repeated:

"The earlier editors were no doubt far too ready to tamper with the original text: some of their successors have run into the other extreme; they perversely maintain the most ridiculous blunders of the old copies, and almost seem disposed to place conjectural criticism on a level with haphazard guesswork. What is called conjecture, however, is neither more nor less than a particular application of circumstantial evidence; and, if we receive such evidence when property or life is at stake, surely we should not reject it when we are sitting in judgment merely on words and syllables. At any rate, we should be sadly disappointed if we expected to escape the hazards of conjecture by a servile adherence to old copies. Scholars and critics are not the only persons who tamper with texts. Correctors, transcribers, and compositors have been much too ready to alter whatever they were unable to understand; their stupid sophistications have too often overlaid the genuine readings, and have been blindly received, as of paramount authority, by the unsuspecting simplicity of overcautious commentators.

"It would be well if the latter stopped here: unfortunately they are not satisfied with retaining corruptions; they must needs attempt to defend and explain them. In consequence they get into a bad habit of wresting and straining language, and finally become thorough proficients in the bewildering art of forcing any sense out of any words. In their desperate efforts to extract sense out of nonsense, the Poet himself has been too often sacrificed to the printer, and has thus gained a character for obscurity to a degree far beyond his deserts."

CAMBRIDGE, March 4, 1881

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# DANIEL WEBSTER

Ladies and Gentlemen:

One hundred years ago to-day, a very quiet but vastly fruitful event took place up in New Hampshire: it was the birth of Daniel Webster. The City of Boston and the State of Massachusetts had this great man in the councils of the Nation nearly twenty-eight years; and I think I may safely say that, from his presence and services there, they have reaped more of honor and of solid benefit than from all the other men they have had in that place during the last two generations put together. Such being the case, I had hoped that Boston would remember her illustrious citizen, her peerless statesman, and make some fitting commemoration of the day. She has not seen fit to do so; and this is one reason why I have undertaken to do what I can, to manifest a becoming respect for the hundredth anniversary of Daniel Webster's birth.+ I fear, indeed, that Boston has not yet fully recovered from that old disease under which she turned away from her greatest and loveliest man, this too in his gray-haired age, and even "struck him with her tongue, most serpent-like, upon the very heart." In earlier days, she seems indeed to have understood and appreciated Webster pretty well; yet I was much taken, some years ago, with a remark made to me by the late Judge Redfield, that "Boston never could get water enough together to float him."

The theme I am to speak upon is one that lies very near my heart, this too both as an American and as a man; and



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I propose to utter my thoughts with considerable plainness and freedom. For, in truth, I have no popularity to lose, and do not care to make any; that being a thing I have no use for, nor should known what to do with, if I had it.

As Americans, we have a right to be proud, we ought to be proud, it will do us good to be proud, of Daniel Webster. He is the one imperial intellect of our nation; altogether the greatest and most catholic mind this country has produced. In fact, he is not so properly one man as a multitude of men, rather say, a multitudinous man; the varied powers, that are commonly dispersed among other men, being massed and consolidated in him. He stands second to none of our lawyers; and his arguments in the Supreme Court of the United States probably did more than those of any other one man, except Chief Justice Marshall, towards establishing the principles and the practice of our national Constitution.

But Webster is something more than our greatest man: he is one of the world's great men. Sage and venerable Harvard, on mature consideration no doubt, has spoken him for one of the seven great orators of the world. At the theater end of her superb Memorial Hall, which has the form of a semicircular polygon, in as many gablets or niches rising above the cornice, the seven heads, of gigantic size, stand forth to public view. First, of course, is Demosthenes the Greek; second, also of course, Cicero the Roman; third, Saint John Chrysostom, an Asiatic Greek, born about the middle of the fourth century; fourth, Jaques Benigne Bossuet, the great French divine and author, contemporary with Louis the Fourteenth; fifth, William Pitt the elder, Earl of Chatham, an Englishman; sixth, Edmund Burke, an Irishman, probably the greatest genius of them all,

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though not the greatest orator; seventh, Daniel Webster. How authentic the likenesses may be, I cannot say, except in the case of Webster: here the likeness is true; and, to my sense, Webster's head is the finest of the seven, unless that of Bossuet may be set down as its peer.

In the world's volume of illustrious statesmen also, Webster's name may justly hold up its head among the highest; very few men having, in this capacity, done so much for the political order and welfare of mankind. As an author, again, he stands very near, if not in, the foremost rank of English classics; some of his speeches, like those of Burke, holding much the same relative place in what may be termed deliberative and argumentative discourse, as *Paradise Lost* holds in epic poetry, Wordsworth's *Ode on Immortality* and his *Ode to Duty* in lyrical poetry, and Shakespeare's four great tragedies in the sphere of dramatic art. But what, in this regard should make Webster especially dear and venerable to us is, that he stands unquestionably at the head of our American classics, and is perhaps the only one of our authors that will live and be studied in future times: I hope indeed that Bryant will so live also, and two or three others, but am far from sure of it. For he must be a mighty tall man, I can tell you, whose head touches the classic summit.†

It seems to me that a great deal too much stress is apt to be laid nowadays, at least among us, on the matter of style: for a good style is not to be reached by making it a paramount aim: in that case the style becomes too self-conscious, thinks quite too much of itself; whereas the proper virtue of style lies in its being kept altogether subordinate to something else. And so the prime secret of a good style in writing is, that words be used purely in their representative character, or as standing for things, and not at all for their

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own sake. This it is that so highly distinguishes Webster's style, — the best yet written on this continent. His language is so transparent, that in reading him one seldom thinks of it, and can hardly see it. In fact, the proper character of his style is perfect, consummate manliness; in which quality I make bold to affirm that he has no superior in the whole range of English prose authorship: even Burke's style, though richer and more varied, is hardly equal to his in this supreme quality. And Webster, in his *Autobiography*, touches the secret of this. "While in college," says he, "I delivered two or three occasional addresses, which were published. I trust they are forgotten: they were in very bad taste. I had not then learned that all true power in writing is in the idea, not in the style; an error into which the *Ars rhetorica*, as it is usually taught, might easily lead stronger heads than mine." +

But Webster was not only a great lawyer, a great orator, a great statesman, a great author, a mighty discourser: he was emphatically a great man, — great in intellect, great in eloquence, great in soul, great in character, and in all the proper correspondences of greatness. Mr. Whipple, in the admirable essay prefixed to his selection of Webster's speeches, aptly and felicitously applies to him the phrase, "colossal manhood." I really do not know of any other single phrase that fits the subject so well. Those who often heard Webster in familiar conversation, if any such survive, will probably tell us they never heard any one else who approached him in that respect. On such occasions he not seldom had the Bible for his theme; and those who listened to his talk thereon could hardly choose but believe that either the Bible was inspired or else the speaker was. But, in "the talk that man holds with week-day man," his

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greatness was so tempered with sweetness and amiability, and with the finer and softer graces of eloquence, that one naturally lost the sense of it. For he had no airs of superiority; would chat with the humblest as with a brother or a friend. And I have it from those who knew him long and well, that intimacy never wore off the impression of his greatness: on the contrary, none could get so near him, or stay near him so long, but that he still kept growing upon them. A test that few men indeed can stand! But he had something better than all this: he was as lovely in disposition as he was great in mind: a larger, warmer, manlier heart, a heart more alive with tenderness and all the gentle affections, was never lodged in a human breast. Of this I could give many telling and touching proofs from his private history, if time would permit. It has been worthily noted how a little child, on entering a room where Webster was seated, and looking up into his great eyes, as these grew soft and mellow and sweet at the vision, would run instinctively into his arms and nestle in his bosom, as if yearning to get as near as possible to that great, tender heart. So that I make no scruple of regarding Daniel Webster as the crowning illustration of our American manhood.

In the higher elements of oratory, I find, or seem to find, a close resemblance between Webster and Burke. Both are consummate masters of rhetoric; yet the rhetoric of both is generally charged to the utmost with energy of thought: no hollowness here; no "sweet smoke"; nothing of mere surface splendor; all is as solid as marble. Many of Webster's strains in this kind have been long and often used for exercise in declamation; but this has only proved that no frequency of reading or hearing can wear the freshness and verdure out of them. And, in the line of parliamentary

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eloquence, nearly everything else produced in this country seems to me tame and flat beside Webster's; while Burke's has well-nigh spoiled for me all else in the language except Webster's.+

In the common principles of all social and civil order, Burke is no doubt our best and wisest teacher. In handling the particular questions of his time, he always involves those principles, and brings them to their practical bearings, where they most "come home to the business and bosoms of men." And his pages are everywhere bright with the highest and purest political morality. Webster, also, is abundantly at home in those common principles: his giant grasp wields them with the ease and grace of habitual mastery: therewithal he is by far the ablest and clearest expounder we have of what may be termed the specialties of our American political system. So that we can hardly touch any point of our National State, but that he will approve himself at once our wisest and our pleasantest teacher. In fact, I hardly know which to commend most, his political wisdom, his ponderous logic, the perfect manliness of his style, or the high-souled enthusiasm which generally animates and tones his discourse; the latter qualities being no less useful to inspire the student with a noble patriotic ardor than the former to arm him with sound and fruitful instruction.

I am not unmindful that, in thus placing Webster alongside of Burke, I may be inviting upon him a trial something too severe.+ I do not indeed regard him as the peer of Burke; but it is my deliberate judgment that he comes nearer to Burke, and can better stand a fair comparison with him, than any other English-speaking statesman. In pure force of intellect, Burke *may be* something ahead of

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him, and is far beyond him in strength and richness of imagination; for he was, as Johnson described him, emphatically "a constellation": on the other hand, Burke's tempestuous sensibility sometimes whirled him into exorbitances, where Webster's cooler temperament and more balanced make-up would probably have held him firm in his propriety. And Webster, though far above imitating any man, abounds in marks of a very close and diligent study of Burke. It seems specially noteworthy, that he was thoroughly at one with Burke in an intense aversion to political metaphysics, and to those speculative abstractions which, if attempted to be carried into the practical work of government, can never do anything but mischief.

This reminds me to say something of the distinguished Southerner who was so long associated with Webster in our national councils. — John Caldwell Calhoun was a very able man, — a man, too, of most pure and honorable character; a perfect gentleman indeed, as Webster also was. And the two men had a profound respect for each other.+ Webster admired the genius of Calhoun, and honored him for his high personal worth. Many a hard pounding, indeed, they gave each other in the national Senate; but their hard poundings were always so marked with bland and good-natured dignity, that no ill feeling ever sprang up between them: each had indeed, and felt that he had, in the other a foeman worthy of his steel; and their official intercourse may be justly set down as a model of senatorial courtesy. But Calhoun, it seems to me, was rather a great political metaphysician than a statesman, in the right sense of the term. In the latter part of his life at least, he was much given to refining among political abstractions, where all sorts of impracticable theories may easily be knocked together,

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and as easily knocked to pieces. Herein Webster differed from him *in toto;* and would never go along at all with the noble Southerner in those speculative intricacies where men "find no end, in wandering mazes lost." For one of his prime characteristics was a large, healthy, vigorous, unfailing common sense, which always withheld him from extremes and one-sideness, and kept him from undertaking to upset or overrule experience and fact by dint of fine-spun political theories. He was indeed a very monarch of common sense; in which respect he probably surpassed Burke. And this, I take it, comes pretty near being the sovereign element of great statesmanship. — Strange, by the way, that the thing should be called *common* sense, while in reality it is one of the most uncommon things in the world. But then, though extremely rare in possession, it is very common in recognition: in fact, nearly all men feel it, though few men have it.

Accordingly in a speech delivered on the 22d of March, 1838, Webster, after referring to certain questions wherein Calhoun had quite shifted off from his old ground, has the following: "The honorable member now takes these questions with him into the upper heights of metaphysics, into the region of those refinements and subtile arguments which he rejected with so much decision in 1817. He quits his old ground of common sense, experience, and the general understanding of the country, for a flight among theories and ethereal abstractions." I must add, that Calhoun, by his course in this respect, probably did a good deal more than any other one man in the country towards hatching and breeding the enormous mischief of our late Civil War. It is said that "whom the gods would destroy they first make mad"; and I can hardly conceive a surer way of

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drawing men into suicidal madness than by fascinating them with metaphysical subtilties and abstraction-mongering.

It is, then, full time that Webster should be reinstated in the place he held some thirty-five years ago in the minds and hearts of the American people. He is as great now as he was then, for time gnaws no breaches in workmanship so solid as his; and his wise counsels are as applicable and as needful in all the leading national questions of this day as they were when his great living voice was heard amongst us. We cannot afford to forget him, or to leave his eloquence and wisdom out of our mental feeding. For the same high lessons, the same sacred inspirations, are needed still; as much so, perhaps, as when his patriotic ardor and his ponderous logic knocked the brains out of Nullification and Secession in the halls of Congress. For these reasons, and sundry others, I was heartily glad when, in 1879, a choice selection of his speeches, edited, and well edited too, by Mr. Edwin Percy Whipple of this city, was given to the public in a form much more accessible to the people generally than ever before. Surely the people of this nation cannot do a better thing for themselves and their children than to cherish the name and memory of Daniel Webster among their dearest household treasures; and this not only as the fairest outcome of American genius and manhood, but as their wisest and most attractive teacher in all that is or should be nearest their hearts as citizens of this great and free Republic.+

As it is now nearly thirty years since Webster died, I may safely presume that many of you, perhaps most of you, never heard or saw him. I will therefore endeavor to give some personal description of the man. I saw him a great

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many times, and heard him repeatedly; and you may be sure my eyes and ears were seldom idle or wandering when they had him in view. He was indeed incomparably the finest looking, rather say the grandest looking, man I ever set eyes on.† I doubt whether, in personal appearance, his peer was to be found anywhere on the planet during his time; and I can well accept as authentic the remark said to have been made by some one, that Daniel Webster must be a humbug, for no man could possibly be so great as he looked to be. In stature he was of medium height, about five feet and ten or eleven inches, I should say; his form well proportioned, robust, and vigorous; his frame close knit and firm set; his step resolute and fearless; his carriage erect and manly; his presence dignified and impressive in the highest degree. His complexion was dark, insomuch that he is said in his early years to have been familiarly called "black Dan"; his hair a pure raven black, till time sprinkled it with snows. I am little booked in physiology, but I should say his temperament was bilious sanguineous, as Burke's appears to have been nervous sanguineous. His features were large and strong, but finely chiseled; his neck thick and sinewy, — a fitting support for the magnificent dome poised upon it; his chin prominent just to the point where firmness stops short of obstinacy; his mouth calm and muscular; his eyes big, dark, and blazing, — in his excited moments they literally seemed two globes of fire; his forehead high, broad, projecting, and massive, — a very cathedral indeed of thought; and the whole suffused and harmonized with an air of majestic grace.

So that the predominant expression of his face and head was that of immense power, but of power held perfectly in hand, and therefore sure to know its time. Hawthorne, in

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his *Marble Faun*, has an expression so fine in itself and so apposite to Webster, that ever since my first reading of the book it has stuck to my memory in connection with him. Speaking of the celebrated bronze statue of Marcus Aurelius the Emperor, he says, "its very look is at once a command and a benediction." In his later years, Webster was often spoken of as "the godlike Daniel"; and, sure enough, the heads that I have seen of old god Jupiter do not show an ampler dome or a more commanding outlook of intellectual majesty. Doubtless it was greatly owing to this expression of innate power which radiated from him, that even in his old age, when many minds were full of devouring thoughts about him, wherever he was present in person he was like Daniel in the lions' den: the lions might indeed growl behind their teeth, but they swallowed their rage, and dared not open their mouths to bite him. — Webster was a modest man; everything about him was unaffected, genuine; no assumption, no arrogance, no conceit: his dignity of manner, his greatness of look, were native to him; and the impression his speaking always made upon me was such that I cannot better describe it than as follows:

> With grave
> Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd
> A pillar of State; deep on his front engraven
> Deliberation sat, and public care;
> And princely counsel in his face did shine
> Majestic: . . . sage he stood
> With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear
> The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look
> Drew audience and attention still as night,
> Or Summer's noontide air.

Webster's vast power of intellect is admitted by all: but it is not so generally known that he was as sweet as he was

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powerful, and nowhere more powerful than in his sweetness. When thoroughly aroused in public speech, there was indeed something terrible about him; his huge burning eye seemed to bore a man through and through: but in his social hours, when his massive brow and features were lighted up with a characteristic smile, it was like a gleam of Paradise; no person who once saw that full-souled smile of his could ever forget it. His goodly person, his gracious bearing, and his benignant courtesy made him the delight of every circle he entered: in the presence of ladies, especially, his great powers seemed to robe themselves spontaneously in beauty; and his attentions were so delicate and so respectful, that they could not but be charmed.

In the summer of 1839, Webster, with several members of his family, made a private visit to England; and it is both pleasant and edifying to learn how he impressed the people there.† Hallam, we are told, was "extremely struck by his appearance, deportment, and conversation." Carlyle pronounced him "a magnificent specimen"; adding, withal, that, "as a preliminary Hercules, one would incline to back him at first sight against all the extant world." Mr. John Kenyon traveled with him four days. Writing, in 1853, to Mr. George Ticknor, of Boston, he says that the acquaintance thus formed "enabled me to know and to love not only the great-brained, but large-hearted, genial man; and this love I have held for him ever since, through good report and evil report; and I shall retain this love for him to the day of my own departure." Again, referring to some of Webster's playful sallies: "Fancy how delightful and how attaching I found all this genial bearing from so famous a man; so affectionate, so little of a humbug. His greatness sat so easy and calm upon him; he never had occasion to whip himself into a froth."

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Before proceeding further, I must frankly admit certain drawbacks and exceptions in the character of my theme. For I have lived too long in this world to approve of everything that any man does, or to expect any man to approve of everything that I do. And I remember, also, the saying of a very wise author, that "the web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together: our virtues would be proud, if our faults whipped them not; and our faults would despair, if they were not cherished by our virtues." And so, to be sure, I have never known any man or woman who seemed to me absolutely perfect, and I venture to doubt whether there be one such now in this room: I have indeed met several who thought or seemed to think themselves so; but in that case I always like to know what their neighbors think about it. At all events, Webster, like other men, certainly had his faults and imperfections; and, amidst so much that was great and noble, candor may not permit the blemishes to be passed over in silence; though I hope to keep ever in mind the saying of Burke, "He censures God, who quarrels with the imperfections of men." And even the faults which I find in Webster appear to me mainly, if not entirely, as things lying on the outside and surface of his character, not as entering into the heart and substance of it.

In the first place, then, it is thought by many, and I am apt to think myself, that Webster sometimes got too nervously anxious to be President of the United States. A great authority tells us that "ambition is the last infirmity of noble minds." Webster undoubtedly had that infirmity in a high degree. As far back as 1834, he began to be talked of for the presidency; and from that time onward his aspirations looked, probably with increasing strength,

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to that office. But I do not believe, and I challenge anybody to prove, that he ever did anything wrong, or anything mean, that he ever swerved a hair from his honest convictions of duty, in order to gain the office. Nor did he affect any indifference, or use any arts of concealment, about it: all was frank, open, and aboveboard with him; no intrigue, no playing at hide and seek, no political trickery, had roothold in his ambition. On this head, we may, with supreme fitness, apply to him what he himself said of Calhoun: "If he had aspirations, they were high and honorable and noble: there was nothing groveling or low or meanly selfish, that came near the head or the heart of Mr. Calhoun."

The truth is, Webster had early and honestly identified himself with what was then known as the Whig party against what was called the Jackson party. The latter had openly put forth as its motto, "To the victors belong the spoils": but the Whig politicians soon became even more recklessly eager to act on this principle than their opponents were. Webster did not share with them at all in this passion; he set his face against it utterly: and, though they wanted his help, and gloried in his leadership, they were still dissatisfied with him because he would not "narrow his mind, and to party give up what was meant for mankind." He told the country again and again, that the spoils system, as it is called, would, if persisted in, "entirely change the character of our government." We have been hearing a great deal lately, none too much though, about the corruption and demoralization growing out of this abominable system. Well, Webster foresaw and foretold the whole evil and danger of it fifty years ago; his most emphatic reprobation of it being uttered in a speech at Worcester, on the

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12th of October, 1832. But the thing was vastly popular then, and brought immense eclat and success to the authors of it. The politicians all went for it of course, and egged it on as a grand step of progress and reform; for such men are always sure to be sailing with the wind, it being the height of their ambition to serve as weathercocks on the top of an edifice, exalted for their levity and versatility, so as to indicate each shifting of the popular gale. But Webster was quite another sort of man; a man built high and strong in moral courage: and the great trouble with him was, that he was ever stemming some headlong current of popularity, and indeed "striding so far ahead of the time as to dwarf himself by the distance." I could point out many instances where he planted himself square against the popular rush and clamor of the day. So he stood inexorably firm against the incorporation of Texas; and he did this expressly on the ground, that he never would consent to add a single foot to the area of slavery. Here, again, the thing was hugely popular: and so even Northern Freesoilers, as they were then called, went for it, and it was carried by their votes; Webster, meanwhile, solemnly forewarning them that it would one day shake the government to its foundations. And, sure enough, that one act was the seminal principle, the prolific germ, of our Civil War, with all its terrible, its unspeakable retributions.

Though myself for many years among the stanchest of Whigs, yet I must now confess that the Whig party, as a whole, was a confoundedly mean party, — mean in its impotent craving for "the loaves and fishes," mean in its unblushing preference of success without merit to merit without success; false to its professions, false to its leaders, false to itself. But it has ever been the curse of democracies to be

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infested with greedy demagogues, that is to say, with mere politicians, — probably the meanest and most noxious animals on the planet. They will at all times eat any quantity of dirt to the people, to get the people's votes. This Webster never did, never would do. Accordingly he was in fact treated better by his political opponents than by his political associates. In 1836 the Whigs nominated Mr. Clay. This was a good nomination, and Webster sustained it heartily. Failing to elect Clay, the party then got badly smitten with the disease of "availability"; in other words, the Whig politicians were dying for the spoils. In the strength of that disease, they elected General Harrison in 1840, and General Taylor in 1848: but they failed to elect General Scott in 1852; whereupon the party died of that disease, as indeed it richly deserved to do. I have it on good authority, that, soon after the nomination of Scott, Webster, then struggling with his last sickness, said to his son Fletcher, "My son, never undertake to serve the Whig party; Sir, the Whig party cannot be served."

I say we all know that Webster aspired to the presidency. Well, he had a right to aspire to the presidency; he *ought* to have aspired to it; he must have been either more or less than a man, not to have so aspired: for he could hardly help seeing, what everybody else saw, that he was generally thought to be altogether the fittest man in the country for that place. And here I am minded to relate a rather apposite passage that occurred during the presidential campaign of 1852. The matter was told me by Mr. William Bates, (I think his name was William,) a prominent lawyer and an estimable gentleman, of Westfield, Massachusetts, long a personal and political friend of Webster. It so happened that they met and rode together in a car. Their talk naturally

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ran a good deal upon the political movements of the day. In the course of their talk, Mr. Bates said to Webster, "Well, Mr. Webster, I have thought a great deal on the subject, and have often asked myself whether, after all, the presidency could do anything for you: and really, Mr. Webster, I doubt whether it could; I am inclined to think you are quite as well without it." Webster replied: "To be frank with you, Mr. Bates, the same question has occurred to me. And perhaps it is as you say; perhaps I am just as well without that office. But, Sir, it is a great office; why, Mr. Bates, it is the greatest office in the world: and I am but a man, Sir; I want it, I want it." Now, if there be any man who thinks a jot the worse of Daniel Webster for all this, I confess I would a little rather not ride in the same coach with that man.

Webster did not rise to that office, or rather the office did not rise to him: it could have added no honor to him; he would have added much honor to it. In truth, as matters then stood, he was too great for the place, or rather he was a greater man than the politicians thought it for their interest to have there. For our politicians, to be sure, like to have their pockets well filled, or their ships well ballasted, with the office patronage of the government; and so they of course prefer to see the presidency held by a putty-head or a doughface; that is to say, a man whom they can work and wind and manage. Webster felt the event deeply, indeed, too deeply. And what I rather regret than censure in him is, that he did not view the result with that calmness, that philosophy, which the world had a right to expect from so great a man; that he allowed himself to be grieved and worried by the disappointment more than in reason he ought. Doubtless his grief was the deeper, because he was conscious of

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having served his country faithfully and well; for the sense of such injustice joined with such ingratitude cuts to the quick: but he should have stayed his lion-hearted manhood on the fact, notorious in all ages, that politicians, in their miserable shortsightedness, will at any time sacrifice their best friends in the vain hope of gaining support from their opponents.

In the second place, Webster was something too loose in his money matters. Though second to none of our statesmen as a financier for the public, he allowed his own private finances to be much disordered; was too careless of incurring debts, not careful enough of paying them. This I reckon a greater fault than the former: in that, he only wronged himself; in this, he did wrong to others. Of course nobody can suppose he meant to keep from others their dues; but this is not quite enough. Probably the right explanation is, that he had his big head swarming with big thoughts, and so was oblivious in this point.

A little incident has come to my knowledge, which may here illustrate his character. I have been told that, on some occasion, Mr. Seaton, one of the editors of *The National Intelligencer*, called on Webster in Washington, and had a talk with him. During their interview, a beggar man came into the room, and solicited an alms. Webster, without pausing in his talk, thrust his fingers into his vest pocket, pulled out a bill, and handed it to the man, who then went out. When the talk came to a pause, Mr. Seaton asked Webster if he knew what he had given to that beggar man. "Beggar man?" said Webster; "what beggar man?" "Why," said Mr. Seaton, "the one who came in just now, while you were talking." "O yes," said Webster, "it seems to me I do remember something about it. Well, what did I give him?" "A hundred-dollar bill," said Mr. Seaton.

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Now, a man may have a right, though even that is doubtful, to be oblivious of what is due in this kind from others to himself; but no one has a right to be oblivious of what is due from himself to others. True, Webster was as far as possible from being either stingy or grasping. If prodigal of his own means, he was nowise greedy of other men's. Neither did he ever use, or abuse, his place in the government to the ends of self-enrichment. Herein it may well be wished that more of our present national lawmakers were guilty of his worst fault: in that case, I suspect their patriotic toils would not prove quite so remunerative as they often do. Webster, indeed, cared nothing for money, while at the same time he had "a tear for pity, and a hand open as day for melting charity"; and whatever cash he at any time had in his purse ran away as freely as water, whether in payment of debts or in relief to the needy. I am only sorry he was not more mindful to be just before being generous either to others or to himself.

But then it is to be borne in mind, that, in giving himself up to the public service, he was obliged to relinquish the greater part of a large professional income. After being twice elected to Congress in his native State, he removed from Portsmouth to Boston in 1817, where he forthwith entered upon a career of great professional distinction, and his legal practice soon rose to the amount of twenty thousand dollars a year; which was a prodigious income for a lawyer in those times. The good people of Boston repeatedly urged him to let himself be nominated for Congress, which he repeatedly declined, chiefly on the ground that he could not afford it. At length, in 1823, they may be said to have forced the nomination upon him: he reluctantly yielded, and was elected. After serving through one Congress, he

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was elected again in 1825, having 4990 votes out of 5000. Now, our national legislators at that time were paid only eight dollars a day, and this only during the actual session of Congress. No wonder Webster held back from such a curtailment of his means. For he was by nature free, generous, and magnificent in his dispositions. Later in life, his vast reputation, the dignity and elegance of his manners, the engaging suavity and affability of his conversation, in a word, the powerful magnetism of the man, drew a great deal of high company round him, and necessarily made his expenses large. Then too all the money in the country could not measure the worth of his services. Still it would have been better for his peace of mind, and would have saved a deal of ugly scandal, if he had kept strictly within the small returns which his great public services brought in to him.

It is but just to add that in his closing years his mind became very uneasy on this account. In the spring of 1852, he being then in President Fillmore's cabinet, a fee of $15,000 was offered him by Goodyear & Company to engage his services in their great India-rubber case. He wanted the fee, but was very loath to undertake the case, as it seemed to him hardly becoming for one in his position to do so. His friends, however, the President among them, strongly advised him to accept the offer: so he argued and won the case. He is said to have expressed a wish for one more such fee, as this would discharge his debts, and make him a free man.

Touching this matter, certain people are wont to speak of Webster as if no other great man had ever run into like embarrassments. Now, Charles Watson Wentworth, the celebrated Marquis of Rockingham, died in 1782, while he was Prime Minister. The day before his death, he gave special directions to have a codicil added to his will,

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canceling all acknowledgments of debt due to him from his "admirable friend, Edmund Burke." The amount of Burke's indebtedness to his lordship is not precisely known; but it is said to have been not less than £30,000. As money was then probably worth twice as much as in Webster's time, this would make a sum nearly equivalent to $300,000 in our reckoning. But Rockingham's mind was framed in such nobility of justice, that he seemed to think himself only honored by such munificence to the transcendent statesman of his age; whose services, however, to his country had not, up to that time, come anywhere near those rendered to this nation by Webster. But both these great men were alike drawn away from living for themselves, and from work that pays, to a course of living and working for mankind, — a service that commonly has to be its own reward.

Webster's service to the country was fully commensurate with his greatness as a man. It may well be questioned, indeed, whether even Washington himself did the nation greater service than he: for without our American Union the achievement of our American independence could hardly have proved a blessing. And so I think the history shows us that, during the interval from the Revolution to the Constitution, the States were not nearly so well off as they had been under the British rule. That rule was of course imperial; and such, in substance and effect, is the rule of our national government now. And, surely, some such paramount and inclusive authority was and ever must be needful in order to keep peace between the States; otherwise it were hardly possible to prevent a chronic antagonism and bloody quarrels from springing up amongst them. There seems to be, indeed, for the American people, no middle

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or tenable ground between the government of our present National Union and that state of things, at once horrible and contemptible, which we call *Mexicanism;* and, rather than the nation should become Mexicanized, it were far better that the whole land, with all the people on it, should be sunk in the depths of the Atlantic Ocean.

Be this as it may, with Webster, love of that Union, ingenerate in his nature, and cherished by his education, had grown with his growth, and strengthened with his strength. He was elected to the National Senate in 1827. Early in his senatorial career he saw that certain causes or forces were working deeply and silently, and therefore the more dangerously, to bring about a rupture of that Union. He also saw that, if the structure of our National State were once demolished, it could never be rebuilt. He also saw that, for preventing this, two things were needful: first, that the people needed to have their minds rightly and thoroughly informed in the nature and principles of our Constitution; second, that they needed to have their hearts inspired with a deep, earnest, heroic passion of nationality, with an ardent, self-sacrificing devotion to the Union, as it was.

Thus his eye took in the whole situation, his mighty grasp of thought surrounded the entire question. He therefore set himself, with all his powers of mind and body, to the work, and never ceased till the work was done. For more than twenty years, it was the main burden of all his thought and all his discourse. He was a great lawyer, and he knew the law: he was a great orator, and could speak what he knew; he was a great statesman, with his mind thoroughly at home in the creative and controlling forces of social, civil, and political well-being: therewithal he had that indispensable element of all high statesmanship, a large, warm, tender

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heart: and in the strength of this combination he saw and felt that the preservation of our National Union was the one thing needful above all others to the welfare of the American people. So, in due time, he just educated and kindled the people up to his own height, filling their minds with his thoughts, their hearts with his fervor, their mouths with his words. In doing this, he won the title of the great Expounder and the great Defender of the American Constitution, and surely no title was ever better deserved. On the 26th of January, 1830, he met the great champion of Southern Nullification in the Senate, wrestled with him, threw him, and broke every bone in his body. I think I may safely affirm that this reply to Hayne produced a greater effect than any other speech ever delivered in the world; excepting, of course, those recorded in the Bible. Speeches greater in themselves have indeed been made: Webster himself has several that are greater; and some of Burke's, I suspect, are greater than any of his; but no one of Burke's, nor any other of Webster's, came up to that in effectiveness. This was greatly owing to the peculiar circumstances of the time, and the state of the public mind. The tide of disunion sentiment was then setting in fast and strong; men's minds were becoming deeply excited and agitated with doubts and misgivings; on all hands, the worth and stability of the Union were drawn in question: Webster turned that tide completely, and it has gone on ebbing ever since: in short, that speech made, and marks, the beginning of a new era in our national life: from that time forward, other thoughts and other feelings took fast roothold in the minds and hearts of the people.

Mr. Hayne was a superb man, able, eloquent, honorable, high souled. Not long after Webster's speech, he withdrew

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from the Senate, and was replaced by a much greater champion of the same cause, who, meanwhile, had resigned the office of Vice-President for that very purpose. When the question came up again, Mr. Calhoun waited till most of the Senators on the other side had said the best they could for the Union; he then took the floor, and in a rapture of logic tore their arguments all to shreds, and sent them flying like straws in a tempest. Then came Webster's turn. So, on the 16th of February, 1833, he took the floor, and just drove a huge wedge of adamantine logic right through the center of Calhoun's masterly argument, splitting it clean asunder from end to end. Nullification was now fairly pounded to a jelly, nor was it ever after able to resume the form of bone and muscle in Congress. Then and there it was that the real battles of the Union were fought and won. For the cause had to be tried in the courts of legislative reason before it could come to trial in the field of battle; nor, in all human probability, would it ever have triumphed in the latter, if its right so to triumph had not first been made good in the former: and that this right was there and thus made good, was mainly owing, under God, to the Herculean intellect, the mighty eloquence, the great soul, the generous and comprehensive wisdom of Daniel Webster.

Of course we all understand that slavery was at the bottom of this whole business. Other causes were indeed often alleged, but this was only a disguise, and probably deceived nobody. Now, Webster hated slavery much, and on all proper occasions he was downright and outspoken in his aversion to it. He thought it a great moral, social, and political evil, a consuming cancer, the *immedicabile vulnus* of the social body; and he often so declared himself. He also saw, what I suppose we all see now, that there was no

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power in the country which could kill slavery but the national government, and that the national government could do this only in the exercise of its military power, and in a case of actual war, — civil war; and this was a remedy which, vastly to his credit, he could not bear to think of.

I believe — I hope you all believe — that love is, in general, if not universally, a higher, better, stronger force than hate. I also hold, — do not you? — that love of that which is good is a better and stronger principle than hatred of that which is bad; though I have nothing to say against hatred of what is bad. I have said that Webster hated slavery much: he did so, his whole life proves it; but he loved the Union more, yes, a good deal more, than he hated slavery. He believed slavery to be bad; he believed the Union to be good. That love was, indeed, all through his public life, a passion with him; nay, more, it was *the* master passion of his soul: it had penetrated every fiber of his being. To his eye, "Earth had not anything to show more fair" than the august and beautiful fabric of our National State. That this mighty structure, this masterpiece of political architecture, should be laid in the dust, was too much for him: the very thought of it literally wrung his heart with anguish. His supreme desire was, to have the Union so strengthened, so established in the minds and hearts of the people, so bound up, so interwoven with their dearest household ties and affections, that neither slavery nor any other power should be able to prevail against it.

Now, there was a considerable and a growing class of people at the North who got so possessed with an all-absorbing, all-consuming hatred of slavery, that they went to hating the Union on slavery's account: on all hands their orators were denouncing the Constitution as "a covenant with Hell";

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were openly avowing the wish, nay, the purpose, of having it exploded; and their burning words were threatening to kindle such a fire as would burn it down. Even Washington himself also, and others who had the strongest claims to gratitude and veneration as the founders and benefactors of our Republic, were daily dragged forth by them, to be roasted in the fires, or tortured on the racks of detraction and defamation; like men desecrating the sepulchers and exhuming the bones of their fathers, in order to gibbet them before the world. At the same time, there was a considerable and a growing class of people at the South, who got so possessed with an all-absorbing, all-consuming love of slavery, that they also went to hating the Union for slavery's sake, and openly embarked in a crusade for breaking it up. Though the spirit of disunion had been thrashed out of the ugly form of Nullification, still it was not dead; and it soon after reappeared in the garb of a very gentle, harmless, smiling lady named Peaceable Secession. Thus the extremists of both sections, the extreme haters of slavery at the North, and the extreme lovers of slavery at the South, were practically leagued together in a common cause, conjointly aiming to break up the Union, to demolish the fabric of our National State, at once the fortress and the temple of American freedom; though, to be sure, they were doing this from opposite motives, the former to destroy slavery, the latter to perpetuate it. Divided in their ultimate aims, they were nevertheless united in their present purpose. And the war of words between them kept waxing hotter and hotter year after year.

At length, in 1850, the thing was visibly growing to a head. Webster saw — at least he believed — that the South were in dead earnest, that they had worked themselves up to the

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full bent, and were really of a mind to do what they were threatening, come what might. He also saw that the controversies then raging between the North and the South, unless they could be allayed, must soon culminate in secession and civil war. The South were talking of *peaceable* secession. Webster knew that secession would not, could not, be peaceable. So, in his speech on the 7th of March, fixing his big, blazing eyes full on the Southern members, he spoke these words: "Peaceable secession! Sir, your eyes and mine are never destined to see that miracle. Who is so foolish — I beg everybody's pardon — as to expect to see any such thing? There can be no such thing as a peaceable secession. Peaceable secession is an utter impossibility. Is the great Constitution under which we live, covering this whole country, is it to be thawed and melted away by secession, as the snows on the mountain melt under the influence of a vernal sun, disappear almost unobserved, and run off? No, Sir! No, Sir! I will not state what might produce the disruption of the Union; but I see, as plainly as I see the sun in heaven, what that disruption itself must produce: I see that it must produce war, and such a war as I will not describe, *in its twofold character*." The words *twofold character* were a hint, if they would but take it, that in such a war the beloved slavery they were fighting for would prove an ugly thorn in their side.

Now, for the prevention, or, if this might not be, for the postponement, of such an issue, Webster felt that every danger must be braved, every exertion made, every sacrifice incurred. For these reasons, he put forth his whole strength in favor of the Compromise Measures of 1850. He well knew the risk he was running; but, in his judgment, the occasion called on him, imperatively, to stand to the work.

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His language to a private friend was, "It seemed to me that the country demanded the sacrifice of a human victim, and I saw no reason why I should not be the victim myself." So, in the last hope of saving his cause, he deliberately staked his all. He himself went down indeed, but the cause was saved. In all this, most assuredly, he was right, nobly right, heroically right. And his whole action at that time proved him to be as great morally as he was intellectually.

In another speech, on the 17th of July, — the last he ever made in the Senate, — he closed with the following: "For myself, I propose, Sir, to abide by the principles and the purposes which I have avowed. I shall stand by the Union, and by all who stand by it. I shall do justice to the whole country, according to the best of my ability, in all I say, and act for the good of the whole country in all I do. I mean to stand upon the Constitution. I need no other platform. The ends I aim at shall be my country's, my God's, and Truth's. I was born an American; I will live an American; I shall die an American; and I intend to perform the duties incumbent upon me in that character to the end of my career. I mean to do this with absolute disregard of personal consequences. What are personal consequences? What is the individual man, with all the good or evil that may betide him, in comparison with the good or evil which may befall a great country in a crisis like this? Let the consequences be what they may, I am careless. No man can suffer too much, and no man can fall too soon, if he suffer or if he fall in defense of the liberties and Constitution of his country." These words, I confess, have to me a very solemn and pathetic interest, as the last ever spoken by our incomparable Senator in that capacity.

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The Compromise Measures were at last carried; and it is admitted by all that they could not have been carried without Webster's powerful aid. Thus the explosion, then so imminent, was postponed. Ten years of time were thereby gained. It is not too much to say that this gaining of time saved the Union: for we may well shudder to think of what, in all probability, would have been the result, had the explosion come on in 1851, instead of 1861. At the former period, we had a divided North and a united South. During the interval, the hideous doings in Kansas took place; which so disgusted and alienated the Northern people, that we then had, for the first time, the golden prospect of a divided South and a united North.

Webster's course touching the Compromise Measures drew upon him a perfect tempest of obloquy and abuse both North and South. My father-in-law, the late Mr. Henry Bright, of Northampton, a very clear-headed and just-thinking man, was in Mobile on private business at the time when Webster's speech of the 7th of March reached that city. He told me that the "fire-eaters" there were seized with such an inexpressible rage against Webster, that he really believed, if they could have got hold of him, they would have chopped him all to pieces. At the same time, and for the same cause, the extremists at the North went with equal fury to butchering his character, — a sort of butchery not very much better, perhaps, than the other. I have no language to describe the shocking bitterness and virulence with which his name was vilified and hunted down here in New England. Why, the moral and social atmosphere of Boston is still sick with the abominable venom spouted against him here by certain *liberal* preachers and lecturers. For I suppose we all know that the most illiberal

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and venom-mouthed men in the world are often found among those who make special professions of liberality, and greatly pride themselves thereon; men who insist on being themselves perfectly free to think and speak their own thoughts, and on having all others perfectly free to think and speak just as they do. For we are to note that the words *liberty* and *liberality* are of kindred origin and meaning: and what is the use of our having liberty, if we be not, *ipso facto*, free to traduce and begnaw and blacken all who are so depraved as not to accept our judgment for their own? Now, for my part, I wish to be liberal even towards illiberality itself; yet must confess I sometimes find this rather difficult. The truth of the matter, as nearly as I can understand it, runs about thus: The men in question had conceived a bitter hatred of the Union; Webster had thoroughly identified himself with the Union: so they just transferred their hatred of the Union to him;+ for such men always take more pleasure in hating a person than a thing; and this, I suppose, partly because a person naturally has sensibilities that may be hurt, which a thing has not: they were laboring with all their might to destroy the Union; Webster had saved the Union; and now they were possessed with an intense longing to destroy him. It may almost be said indeed that they did destroy him: at least their envenomed calumnies greatly embittered his closing years, and sent him sorrowing to his grave. But they did not destroy his work: the Union was saved. In all this we have a memorable instance of what fanaticism can do, especially when actuated by a sort of philanthropic ferocity. Nor has the spirit engendered by those proceedings fully died out yet: even to this day it is hardly safe for a man to speak an honest plain word in defense of this part of Webster's

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life, lest popular odium should pelt him with mud or something worse.

Now, during all those years I was myself a most cordial hater of slavery; though I never went to the extreme — God forbid! — of hating either the Union or Webster: for how hatred of these could do anything towards pulling slavery down, was quite beyond me. Nor was I ever able to comprehend why the Abolitionists should make it an exercise of religion, as they did, to go about cursing and reviling all that was greatest and best in the work of our national fathers: it seemed to me then, as it seems to me now, an aggravated revival of that old mystery, the *odium theologicum;* that is to say, the offspring of sheer fanaticism, and a very malignant fanaticism too; the selfsame spirit that has more than once set men to cutting throats in the name of liberty and philanthropy.

As for the speech of the 7th of March, for which Webster was so bitterly, so atrociously maligned, I have read that speech a great many times, and I do not know of a single word in it that I would have otherwise than as it is. I think it every way just such a speech as should have been made at that time by a great man, who had a great Union to save, and a great civil war to avert.+ Nor could Webster have consistently taken any other course: he would have belied his whole record, he would have been recreant to the sovereign aim of his life, if, in that great national crisis, he had not thrown all other regards to the winds, and made the Union his paramount, nay, his exclusive concern. So, there again, though, to be sure, with his great heart quivering and bleeding at the defection of friends, and the cruel, cruel aspersions of those whom he had loved so deeply and served so devotedly, he stood firm as a rock against the surging and

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dashing waves of unpopularity in his own cherished home. Seeing the peril as he saw it, he must needs have braved popular clamor as he braved it, else he would have ceased to be Daniel Webster. So that Massachusetts went back on him, or froze off from him, just at the very time when he was worthiest of her love and honor. But then we all ought to know that, in all cases, the blind or the blear-eyed many are pretty sure to denounce and defame the one who sees. When, in 1830 and 1833, Webster encountered Nullification in debate, and strangled it in the crushing anaconda folds of his logic and eloquence, he appeared great indeed, and was great; though he then had all New England and most of the entire North backing him up and cheering him on. But a great man never appears so great as when he stands true to himself and his cause, with all the world against him. And so, to my thinking, at no other time of his life did Webster's stubborn greatness of soul, his "colossal manhood," tower up in such monumental grandeur as when, in 1850, he stood true to himself, "unshaken, unseduced, unterrified," with all New England and most of the entire North banded together to pelt him off and hiss him down.

> The fineness of such metal is not found
> In Fortune's love; for them the bold and coward,
> The hard and soft, seem all affined and kin:
> But, in the wind and tempest of her frown,
> Distinction, with a broad and powerful fan,
> Puffing at all, winnows the light away;
> And what hath mass and matter, by itself
> Lies rich in virtue and unmingled.

Webster had foreseen and foretold a whirlwind of civil war as the inevitable consequence of the wind which the antagonist extremists were sowing. Both parties alike laughed

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him to scorn; they derided his fears, they despised his warnings; could not speak of them save as themes of scoffing and ridicule; saying that they were the mere offspring of his inordinate ambition; that he had turned prophet merely because he wanted to be President. Nor did they give over this work when the great man died: they even made his death a crime; alleging that he had died of disappointed ambition and from the effects of personal vices; just as if a man at the age of three-score and ten had not a right to die! Now, Webster, I take it, was at least not a fool, not absolutely a fool. Nor was he so little read in the book of human nature and human life as not to know that the course he was taking could not possibly gain him anything at the South, while it was sure to lose him much at the North. Any man with but half an eye could not fail to see that. And Webster himself had plainly declared it in a passage I have already cited. Strange, strange indeed, what absurd reasons even good men will sometimes stick upon, for thinking that a man cannot possibly differ from them in opinion, unless he have a bad heart!

So, in the instance before us, the treatment Webster received proceeded, apparently, upon the rather odd notion, that, in the political questions of the time, he was just the last man in the country who ought to be allowed to have a mind of his own. A great many people in Massachusetts, it seems, could nowise conceive on what ground, or by what right, he should presume to have a mind larger than their own State, or, at all events, larger than their own section. That his heart dared to be big enough to embrace the whole United States, and to be satisfied with nothing less, and that his moral manhood spread so wide, and stood so firm, as to be unflinchingly steadfast to the integrity of the Union, —

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this was, in the eye of Massachusetts, an unpardonable sin: she could not forgive it then, she has not forgiven it now. But, assuredly, Webster's great soul will sooner or later be found to have been greater than she, and will prove too strong for her yet. For, indeed, he was not *her* man; he was emphatically the nation's man: and, though he loved her deeply, yet he would not budge an inch from his life-long purpose as an American, to gratify her sectional narrowness, or her war-kindling philanthropy.

How he thought and felt touching this whole matter, is perhaps best shown in a speech made at Buffalo on the 22d of May, 1851. Of course he is referring to his line of action in 1850: "I am an American. I was made a whole man, and I did not mean to make myself half a one. I felt that I had a duty to perform to my country, to my own reputation; for I flattered myself that a service of forty years had given me some character, on which I had a right to repose for my justification in the performance of a duty attended with some degree of local unpopularity. I thought it was my duty to pursue this course, and I did not care what was to be the consequence. I felt it was my duty, in a very alarming crisis, to come out; to go for my country, and my whole country; and to exert any power I had, to keep that country together. I cared for nothing, I was afraid of nothing, but I meant to do my duty. Duty performed makes a man happy; duty neglected makes a man unhappy. I therefore, in the face of all discouragements and all dangers, was ready to go forth and do what I thought my country, your country, demanded of me. And, Gentlemen, allow me to say here to-day, that if the fate of John Rogers had stared me in the face, if I had seen the stake, if I had heard the fagots already crackling, by the blessing of Almighty God I

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would have gone on and discharged the duty which I thought my country called upon me to perform."

I think very highly of our Mr. Whittier both as a poet and as a man. I hold him to be a man of real genius, and of an altogether honorable and lovable character. But he has one little piece that I am sorry for. It was written in 1850, and is entitled *Ichabod*.+ I cannot see that it has any great merit as poetry; and I see, or seem to see, in it not a little fault of uncharitableness: nay, I must go further, — the uncharity of it is simply atrocious. Now, I do not believe there is or can be an honester man than Mr. Whittier; but I hold Webster to have been every whit as honest as he, and at the same time a thousandfold wiser and vastly more charitable. It is no business of mine, nor do I propose to make it my business; but, if I were an intimate friend of Mr. Whittier, I should be very earnest with him to recall and suppress that poem. It is not worthy of him. But, whether he did so or not, I should still continue to honor him all the same, notwithstanding. It is nowise likely that I shall ever give a lecture upon him; if, however, I were to do so, I am afraid I should have to note this as a greater fault in him than any I am able to find in Webster.

It is but fair to add, indeed it would be hardly fair not to add, that Mr. Whittier has lately put forth another poem, in which he makes some considerable amends for the piece of 1850. This is entitled *The Lost Occasion*, and was published in *The Atlantic Monthly* for April, 1880; not known to me, however, when the foregoing strictures were written.+ In his later piece, the author thinks that, if Webster had lived ten years longer, he would have been "disillusioned." Webster disillusioned! Disillusioned of what? Why, his presentiments, his predictions, all his worst forebodings,

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were justified, and more than justified, by the event. Was his prevision of civil war an illusion? Nay, the horrors and agonies of that war altogether outstripped the utmost that even he had strength to apprehend. Truly, one would think that Mr. Whittier, and not Webster, was the man to be disillusioned. Potent, potent indeed must have been the spell which, in so fair a mind, those four dreadful years of civil carnage could not break!

In the earlier piece, at all events, Mr. Whittier prophesied an untrue thing, — for Webster's glory has not departed; — is it not a glorious thing to be enrolled by wise old Harvard as one of the seven great orators of the world? — in that case at least, I say, Mr. Whittier prophesied an untrue thing, — and he was believed; Webster prophesied a true thing, and he was not believed: for, indeed, "his was the wise man's ordinary lot, to prophesy to ears that would not hear." But Massachusetts had then outgrown Webster, — so far outgrown him as to prefer one Horace Mann, who was among the loudest in rancorous invective against him. So, to shame Webster into her wisdom, her honorable Legislature had a statue of the said Horace Mann set up in front of the Capitol, and there it stands now. (By the way, I wish the friends of Webster would, some Sunday night when the moon is shining, reverently take his statue out of that inclosure, and put it in some humbler place. For, surely, Webster is not worthy to stand there in such high company; no, he is not worthy of that!) And Massachusetts has kept on growing since: why, she has grown almost to the bigness of General Butler! She has not indeed quite overtaken his stature yet; but perhaps she will erelong, for she is still growing. Yet no! I doubt whether she will ever grow big enough for him, — big enough either to swallow him or be

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swallowed by him; though, to be sure, he is the owner, or the tenant in fee, of "an unbounded stomach."

Well, when at length Webster's predictions began to come true; when Secession stood forth an actual fact, a presence that could not be put by, the political leaders of the Northern extremists, both in and out of Congress, were utterly aghast, as indeed they well might be, at the final outcome of their doings. They had, by their incantations, raised, or helped to raise, something that looked very like the Devil; and now the one all-engrossing thought was how to get rid of it. They had not believed the South were really in earnest, and they had imputed Webster's belief of it to bad motives. But there the thing was at last; and what could be done with it? that was the question. So they put their heads together, and made a formal proposition to the Southern leaders, solemnly pledging themselves to use all their efforts to carry through such an amendment of the Constitution as would secure slavery absolutely and forever against all interference by the general government. The Southern leaders, in the misplaced pride of their hearts, spurned away the proposition, and laughed at the makers of it. They had got their heads very high.

The extremists of both sections had at first hated Webster because they did not understand him, and had wronged him because they hated him; and now they kept on hating him because they had wronged him. He had forewarned them of a particular mischief as the sure result of the course they were taking; they had despised his counsels, and ascribed them to an evil mind: and when his forecast became a fact, instead of relenting towards him, they even hated him worse than ever; the very thought of him stung them with self-reproach; and they sought to avenge upon

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him the mischief they had brought upon themselves, and went to accusing him as the author of what he had foretold. So, within the last few years, I have repeatedly found men seriously holding Webster responsible for our Civil War! Such is human nature; and so, in all ages, have men been wont to recompense their greatest benefactors! But wisdom not the less, though late, is sure to be justified of her children. And so, assuredly, it will be with Webster.

At the time I am referring to, Webster's body had been in the grave nearly eight years and a half; but his spirit, though slumbering, was still alive, and would not die. His words were on the lips and in the hearts of the people from Maine to California. Mark, then, how "the whirligig of time brought in his revenges." When at length the attack on Fort Sumter rang all through the land like an omnipresent clap of thunder, then it was that Webster's spirit awoke as from the dead. This time, the South had raised a spirit, not indeed so hideous as the one I mentioned before, but a great deal more terrible. That spirit was — love of the Union. And whose spirit was that but Webster's? How gloriously it made the people of the North spring to arms! Yes, the great soul of Daniel Webster breathing and beating in them, — this it was that set them astir, impelling them to the front, and holding them to the work, till Secession was finally overwhelmed beneath a wide-sweeping torrent of blood and fire! +

Now, that war cost the North not less than eight hundred thousand lives and six thousand millions of money! Perhaps the demoralization engendered out of it should be rated as a still greater cost: the nation has not got over it yet, nor will it for fifty years to come. But, in the conflict which itself had provoked, slavery fell, and great was the fall

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thereof. *Gloria in excelsis* for that fall! For slavery was a loathsome and execrable old nuisance; I thought so then, I think so now: and the only good thing it could possibly do was to die. I admit, indeed, that the purchase was worth the cost; but it was a dreadful, dreadful price to pay, even for so auspicious a riddance as that!

Of course, if the extremists, those who got up the war, had foreseen what was coming, the thing would not have come; at least it would not have come when it did. Yet, surely, it was bound to come, sooner or later; it was only a question of time. But, thanks to Daniel Webster, the war was adjourned till, as the event proved, the nation was duly prepared for it, though not so prepared but that it was deeply punished in and by it. Nor did it escape his "large discourse" that the crisis, after all, was but postponed: I have been told that in his private intercourse he expressed it as his settled conviction that such was the case. But, surely, Providence had a controlling hand in the whole matter; and Providence knows its time, as it also knows how to make a good use of the blunders of men. Now, those who had no foresight of what was coming may stand acquitted of crime, though not of blundering: yet I cannot say this for their huge unbenevolence towards their best friend: ignorance may be pardoned, malice may not. But, as Webster had a forecast of the whole, he was bound on every principle of humanity and of manhood to act as he did: nay, he would have been utterly inexcusable both as a statesman and as a man, if he had acted otherwise.

But why was it that slavery had to fall? Here I may claim some right to know what I am saying, because I had ocular and auricular proof on the subject. For I was myself in the army three years, serving the cause with such poor abilities

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as I had. And I was perfectly satisfied from the outset, that either slavery or the nation was bound to perish: I felt just as sure of it then as I do now. In the summer of 1861, I was living in the city of New York. Seeing in the papers one morning a notice of a meeting to be held in Hope Chapel for the purpose of helping on the war, I took a notion to go to it. Being there, I felt moved to make a speech. Having gained the ear of the audience, almost before I knew what I was saying, these words popped out of my mouth: "Slavery has now forced itself into a mortal duel with Uncle Sam, and one of them has got to die; and, so far as I am concerned, it shall not be Uncle Sam." At first, I was startled with the apprehension of having gone too far; but, the audience raising a shout of applause, I saw that things were all right, and so went on.

Carrying, as I did, this deep-seated conviction into the field, I longed, intensely longed, to have slavery knocked on the head. So I wanted to blaze away against it in my talks to the soldiers. Once or twice I did so, to some extent. My official superiors took me to task for this; telling me that they had nothing to do with slavery; that they were there to sustain the government; and that they could not have discord and dissension sown among the soldiers by talks on that subject. In short, they gave me a peremptory order to let it alone. Of course I obeyed, though it went somewhat against the grain with me. And the order was undoubtedly right. I was serving in the Department of the South; and my heart fairly leaped for joy when General Hunter issued his order or proclamation for emancipating the slaves in that Department. Yet I was not without serious misgivings; for it rather seemed to me that such a measure as that ought to proceed from no one but the Commander-in-

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Chief of the armies and navies of the United States. You are probably aware that, when the order became known to President Lincoln, he forthwith overruled and countermanded it. This I was then sorry for. But, you see, I was in too great a hurry. Herein I was not so wise, not quite so wise, as our great and good and divinely patient President. He, with his patience long and sorely tried by unwise and impatient men like myself, — tried quite as much perhaps in that way as in any other, — held back, and waited for the "riping of the time." In calling them unwise and impatient men like myself, I am far from meaning to compare my insignificant self generally with them; for they were, many of them, wise and good men in their degree; but, I suspect, not quite so wise and patient as our good father Abraham. But, when our President saw, — for he had a strong, clear head on his shoulders as well as a warm and tender heart in his bosom, — when he saw that the time had come, he just hurled his thunderbolt, and knocked slavery into the place where it should be. By that time the soldiers had all been taught by the discipline and logic of events, that they had got to choose between the death of slavery and the death of the nation; that both of these could not possibly survive the struggle: and, when it came to that, they of course chose as Webster had taught and inspired them to choose.

So then, while others had been pouring out, in language hissing hot, their intense hatred of slavery, and even of the Union for slavery's sake, Webster had been pouring out his irresistible argument and eloquence in behalf of the Union which he loved; and the love kindled by that eloquence and upheld by that argument, — this it was that really did the work. For, in truth, it so happened at that time, that the best and surest way to crush slavery was by strengthening

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the Union, — by arming Uncle Sam with a hand so big and so powerful, that he could just seize the bull of disunion by the horns, and wring the bull's head off. And so, when the people, both those at home and those in the field, became thoroughly convinced, as in time they did, that either slavery or Uncle Sam had got to die, they said, Uncle Sam shall not die, and slavery shall; and the spirit which thus spoke had been kindled within them by the man who was born up in New Hampshire one hundred years ago this day. Webster, to be sure, did not intend the destruction of slavery; that was nowise the motive of his labors: but he did intend that the Union should be kept alive, and all his mighty energies were directed to this end; such being, as I must think, the special purpose for which he was providentially endowed, and given to the American people. And so the extremists, North and South, — they it was who, between them, got up our Civil War; Webster had no hand in that; but he it was who, in effect, fought the battles and gained the victories of the Union: for, as the late Judge Redfield, of this city, once said to me, "the war was all fought out on Daniel Webster's lines."

Now, which do you suppose did the most towards the final result, hatred of slavery, or love of the Union? Which was the stronger principle here, hatred of that which was bad, or love of that which was good? And who did the most for the final triumph of the very cause which the Abolitionists had so much at heart, they themselves, or the man whom they so mercilessly calumniated? They endeavored with all their might to break him down; and he just saved them from the crime, and the infamy, of breaking up our national Union: for how would they have stood before the world at this day, if that Union had perished by the fire

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which they were kindling? Why, they would have been an object of universal execration! a mark of abhorrence to coming time, as the philanthropic incendiaries who had destroyed the last hope of republican institutions upon earth!

This, then, is the revenge that Webster has taken upon them, — he served their own cause far better than they did themselves. While they were warring against him, he was preparing victory for them. He did not know this, they did not know it; but he was doing right, they were doing wrong: he was acting from love, they were acting from hate: he was trying to make peace, they were trying to break peace, between the North and the South: they, to be sure, succeeded for a time, but his success was the more lasting: and my copy of the Bible the seventh of the Divine Beatitudes does not read "Blessed are the peace-*breakers*," nor do I think it ought to read so. And do you not believe, — do you not *know*, — that Daniel Webster really did more towards smashing up slavery than all the Abolitionists in the country put together? It need not be said that slavery was killed; that is pretty evident: but I think it may need to be said, at all events it shall be said, that Daniel Webster was the man who killed it; not, I repeat, from hatred of slavery, but from love of the Union: yes, he, he was the Hercules who slew the monster, and saved the lady! And may we not reasonably hope that the day is not far distant, when a just sense of his vast service in this behalf shall purge the moral and social atmosphere of Boston, and of Massachusetts, of the dreadful venom and virulence breathed into it more than thirty years ago?

Ladies and Gentlemen, great cause have we to thank God for the gift of Daniel Webster to this nation, and to bless the

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day when he was born. I think, withal, we may rest assured that he still lives, and is not going to die. His memory will out-tongue and live down whatever has hitherto tried, or may hereafter try, to choke it off; his name will still be fresh and fragrant in the world's regard, when all the lingual rancors which so embittered his closing years shall have died away in blank forgetfulness.+ He had "a voice whose sound was like the sea"; and that voice will keep swelling up and rolling on, strong, clear, and sweet, ages after the unbenevolent shriekings of his time, and of our time, shall have gone silent forever, Nature's air refusing to propagate them; a treasure to be cherished with reverential affection so long as the American name shall have a place in the reverence and affection of mankind. For, indeed, it is already coming to be seen, as it has never been seen before, that his broad, wise statesmanship is to be the ample and refreshing shade, his character the bright and breezy presence, in which all the members of this great and illustrious Republic may meet and sit down and feast together.

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# APPENDIX

## I

The speech made by Governor Long, at the dinner given by the Marshfield Club in commemoration of Webster's hundredth birthday, is so manly, so able, so workmanlike, and so eloquent in itself, therewithal so just to the subject, and so honorable to the speaker, that I cannot well resist the temptation to transcribe it here, in a place more convenient for preservation and reference than in the newspaper columns where it appeared:

It is but a poor tribute that even the most eloquent voice, least of all mine, can pay for Massachusetts to the memory of her greatest statesman, her mightiest intellect, and her most powerful orator. Among her sons he towers like the lonely and massive shaft on Bunker Hill, upon the base and the crest of which his name is emblazoned clearer than if chiseled deep in its granite cubes. For years he was her synonym. Among the States he sustained her at that proud height, which Winthrop and Samuel Adams gave her in the colonial and provincial days. With what matchless grandeur he defended her! With what overwhelming power he impressed her convictions upon the national life! God seems to appoint men to special work, and, that done, the very effort of its achievement exhausts them, and they rise not again to the summit of their meridian. So it was with Webster. He knows little even of written constitutions and frames of government who does not know that they exist almost less in the letter than in the interpretation and construction of the letter. In this light it is not too much to say that the Constitution of the United States, as it existed when it carried our country through the greatest peril that ever tested it, was the crystallization of the mind of Webster as well as of its original framers. It came from



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them, and was only accepted by some of our own, as a compact of States, sovereign in all but certain enumerated powers delegated to a central government. He made it the crucible of a welded Union, — the charter of one great country, the United States of America. He made the States a Nation and infolded them in its single banner. It was the overwhelming logic of his discussion, the household familiarity of his simple but irresistible statement, that gave us munition to fight the war for the preservation of the Union and the abolition of slavery. It was his eloquence, clear as crystal, and precipitating itself in the schoolbooks and literature of a people, which had trained up the generation of twenty years ago to regard this Nation as one, to love its flag with a patriotism that knew no faction or section, to be loyal to the whole country, and to find in its Constitution power to suppress any hand or combination raised against it. The great rebellion of 1861 went down hardly more before the cannon of Grant and Farragut than the thunder of Webster's reply to Hayne. He knew not the extent of his own achievement. His greatest failure was, that he rose not to the height and actual stroke of his own resistless argument, and that he lacked the sublime inspiration, the disentanglement and the courage, to let the giant he had created go upon his errand, first of force, and then, through that, of surer peace. He had put the work and the genius of more than an ordinary lifetime of service into the arching and knitting of the Union, and this he could not bear to put to the final test: his great heart was sincere in the prayer that his eyes might not behold the earthquake that would shake it to those foundations which, though he knew it not, he had made so strong that a succeeding generation saw them stand the shock as the oak withstands the storm. Men are not gods, and it needed in him that he should rise to a moral sublimity and daring as lofty as the intellectual heights above which he soared with unequaled strength. So had he been godlike.

A great man touches the heart of the people as well as their intelligence. They not only admire, they also love him. It sometimes seems as if they sought in him some weakness of our common human nature, that they may chide him for it, forgive it, and so endear him to themselves the more. Massachusetts had her friction with the younger Adams only to lay him away with profounder honor, and to remember him devotedly

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as the defender of the right of petition and "the old man eloquent." She forgave the overweening conceit of Sumner; she revoked her unjust censure of him, and now points her youth to him in his high niche as the unsullied patriot, without fear and without reproach, who stood and spoke for equal rights, and whose last great service was to demand and enforce his country's just claims against the dishonorable trespass of the cruisers of that England he had so much admired. Massachusetts smote, too, and broke the heart of Webster, her idol, and then broke her own above his grave, and to-day writes his name highest upon her roll of statesmen. It seems disjointed to say that, with such might as his, the impression that comes from his face upon the wall, as from his silhouette upon the background of our history, is that of sadness, — the sadness of the great deep eyes, the sadness of the lonely shore he loved, and by which he sleeps. The story of Webster from the beginning is the very pathos of romance. A minor chord runs through it like the tenderest note in a song. What eloquence of tears is in that narrative, which reveals in this giant of intellectual strength the heart, the single, loving heart of a child, and in which he describes the winter sleigh ride up the New Hampshire hills when his father told him that, at whatever cost, he should have a college education, and he, too full to speak, while a warm glow ran all over him, laid his head upon his father's shoulder and wept!

The greatness of Webster and his title to enduring gratitude have two illustrations. He taught the people of the United States, in the simplicity of common understanding, the principles of the Constitution and government of the country, and he wrought for them, in a style of matchless strength and beauty, the literature of statesmanship. From his lips flowed the discussion of constitutional law, of economic philosophy, of finance, of international right, of national grandeur, and of the whole range of high public themes, so clear and judicial that it was no longer discussion, but judgment. To-day, and so it will be while the Republic endures, the student and the legislator turn to the full fountain of his statement for the enunciation of these principles. What other authority is quoted or holds even the second or third place? Even his words have imbedded themselves in the common phraseology, and come to the tongue like passages from the psalms or the poets. I do not know that a sentence or a word of Sumner's

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repeats itself in our everyday parlance. The exquisite periods of Everett are recalled like the consummate work of some master of music, but no note or refrain sings itself over and over again to our ears. The brilliant eloquence of Choate is like the flash of a bursting rocket, lingering upon the retina indeed after it has faded from the wings of the night, but as elusive of our grasp as spray-drops that glisten in the sun. The fiery enthusiasm of Andrew did, indeed, burn some of his heart beats forever into the sentiment of Massachusetts; but Webster made his language the very household words of a nation. They are the library of a people. They inspired and still inspire patriotism. They taught and still teach loyalty. They are the schoolbook of the citizen. They are the inwrought and accepted fiber of American politics. If the temple of our Republic shall ever fall, they will "still live" above the ground, like those great foundation stones in ancient ruins, which remain in lonely grandeur, unburied in the dust that springs to turf over all else, and making men wonder from what rare quarry and by what mighty force they came. To Webster, almost more than to any other man, — nay, at a distance and in the generous spirit of this occasion it is hard to discriminate among the lustrous names which now cluster at the gates of Heaven, as the golden bars mass the West at sunset, — yet to Webster especially of them all is it due that to-day, wherever a son of the United States, at home or abroad, "beholds the gorgeous ensign of the Republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in their original luster, not a stripe erased or polluted, not a single star obscured," he can utter a prouder boast than *Civis Romanus sum*. For he can say, *I am an American citizen.*

## II

### WEBSTER AND GIDDINGS

To the Editor of the *Transcript:* The *Transcript* of the 25th instant prints a communication from Mr. F. B. Sanborn, of Concord, which has caused me not a little surprise. It contains a letter from the Honorable J. R. Giddings,

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formerly a representative in Congress from Ohio, to the Reverend Theodore Parker. A part of the letter is as follows:

HALL OF REPRESENTATIVES, January 29, 1853

My dear Sir: You may recollect that, early in the session of Congress of 1847–1848, the absorbing subject of the presidential candidates was much agitated. Mr. Webster had a few friends, but it became apparent that his prospect for nomination was not good. I took occasion to suggest to some of his friends that Mr. Webster might yet place himself in a most enviable position by taking ground in favor of liberty, and against the encroachments of slavery. I did this with the hope of bringing him out on that subject, as I knew that his talents and influence would do much for the advancement of our cause. Soon after this, at a party, Mr. Webster informed me that he desired to submit a question for my opinion, on which he wished me to be very frank. Accordingly, a few days afterward, the skeleton of a speech, in his handwriting, was submitted to my inspection. It took ground in favor of Northern rights and against the encroachments of slavery. I expressed approval, and, for a long time, expected its delivery in the Senate.

It will be seen that this letter was written at least four years after the session of Congress to which it refers. Surely Mr. Giddings must have overlooked or forgotten two very remarkable speeches made by Webster: one on the 1st of March, 1847, and entitled *The Mexican War;* the other on the 23d of March, 1848, and entitled *Objects of the Mexican War*. Both speeches are given in the fifth volume of Webster's Works, Little & Brown's edition, 1851. I hope you will not find it inconvenient to print a few extracts from those speeches, in justice to all the parties concerned. In the first of them we have the following:

At present, I should hardly have risen but to lay before the Senate the resolutions of the House of Representatives of Massachusetts, adopted on Thursday last. We have a great deal of commentary and criticism on State resolutions brought here. Those of Michigan particularly have been very sharply and

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narrowly looked into, to see whether they really mean what they seem to mean. These resolutions of Massachusetts, I hope, are sufficiently distinct and decided. They admit of neither doubt nor cavil, even if doubt or cavil were permissible in such a case.

What the legislature of Massachusetts thinks, it has said, and said plainly and directly. I have not, before any tribunal, tried my ingenuity at what the lawyers call a special demurrer for many years; and I never tried it here in the Senate. In the business of legislation, and especially in considering State resolutions and the proceedings of public assemblies, it is our duty, of course, to understand everything according to the common meaning of the words used. Of all occasions, these are the last in which one should stick in the bark, or seek for loopholes or means of escape; or, in the language of an eminent judge of former times, "hitch and hang on pins and particles." We must take the substance fairly, and as it is, and not hesitate about forms and phrases.

We are in the midst of a war, not waged at home in defense of our soil, but waged a thousand miles off, and in the heart of the territories of another Government. It is not denied that this war is now prosecuted for the acquisition of territory; at least, if any deny it, others admit it, and all know it to be true. Seven or eight of the free States, comprising some of the largest, have remonstrated against the prosecution of the war for such a purpose, in language suited to their meaning. These remonstrances come here with the distinct and precise object of dissuading us from the further prosecution of the war for the acquisition of territory by conquest. Before territory is actually obtained, and its future character fixed, they beseech us to give up an object so full of danger. One and all, they protest against the extension of slave territory; one and all, they regard it as the solemn duty of the Representatives of the free States to take security, in advance, that no more slave States shall be added to the Union. They demand of us this pledge, this assurance, before the purchase money is paid, or the bargain concluded.

Then, after reading the Massachusetts resolutions, Webster went on as follows:

The House of Representatives of Massachusetts is, I believe, the most numerous legislative body in the country. On this occasion it was not full; but among those present there was an

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entire unanimity. For the resolutions there were two hundred and thirty votes; against them, none. Not one man stood up to justify the war upon such grounds as those upon which it has been, from day to day, defended here. Massachusetts, without one dissenting voice, and I thank her for it, and am proud of her for it, has denounced the whole object for which our armies are now traversing the plains of Mexico, or about to plunge into the pestilence of her coasts. The people of Massachusetts are as unanimous as the members of her legislature, and so are her Representatives here. I have heard no man in the State, in public or in private life, express a different opinion. If anything is certain, it is certain that the sentiment of the whole North is utterly opposed to the acquisition of territory, to be formed into slaveholding States, and, as such, admitted into the Union.

But here, Sir, I cannot but pause. I am arrested by occurrences of this night, which, I confess, fill me with alarm. They are ominous, portentous. Votes which have just been passed by majorities here cannot fail to awaken public attention. Every patriotic American, every man who wishes to preserve the Constitution, ought to ponder them well. . . .

Mr. President, I arraign no men and no parties. I take no judgment into my own hands. But I present this simple statement of facts and consequences to the country, and ask for it, humbly but most earnestly, the serious consideration of the people. Shall we prosecute this war for the purpose of bringing on a controversy which is likely to shake the Government to its center? . . .

Within a year or two after Texas had achieved her independence, there were those who already spoke of its annexation to the United States. Against that project I felt it to be my duty to take an early and a decided course. Having occasion to address political friends in the City of New York in March, 1837, I expressed my sentiments as fully and as strongly as I could. From those opinions I have never swerved. From the first I saw nothing but danger to arise to the country from such annexation. . . .

Sir, I fear we are not yet arrived at the beginning of the end. I pretend to see but little into the future, and that little affords no gratification. All I can scan is contention, strife, and agitation. Before we obtain a perfect right to conquered territory, there must be a cession. A cession can only be made by treaty. Will the North consent to a treaty bringing in territory

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subject to slavery? Will the South consent to a treaty bringing in territory from which slavery is excluded? Sir, the future is full of difficulties and full of dangers. We are suffering to pass the golden opportunity for securing harmony and the stability of the Constitution. We appear to me to be rushing upon perils headlong, and with our eyes wide open. But I put my trust in Providence, and in that good sense and patriotism of the people which will yet, I hope, be awakened before it is too late.

Still more emphatic, if possible, are the following passages from the speech made a little more than a year later:

On Friday a bill passed the Senate for raising ten regiments of new troops for the further prosecution of the war against Mexico; and we have been informed that that measure is shortly to be followed, in this branch of the legislature, by a bill to raise twenty regiments of volunteers for the same service. I was desirous of expressing my opinions against the object of these bills, against the supposed necessity which leads to their enactment, and against the general policy which they are apparently designed to promote. Circumstances personal to myself, but beyond my control, compelled me to forego, on that day, the execution of that design. . . .

This war was waged for the object of creating new States, on the southern border of the United States, out of Mexican territory, and with such population as could be found resident thereupon. I have opposed this object. I am against all accessions of territory to form new States. And this is no matter of sentimentality, which I am to parade before mass meetings or before any constituents at home. It is not a matter with me of declamation, or of regret, or of expressed repugnance. It is a matter of firm, unchangeable purpose. I yield nothing to the force of circumstances that have occurred, or that I can consider as likely to occur. I therefore say, Sir, that, if I were asked to-day whether, for the sake of peace, I would take a treaty for adding two new States to the Union on our southern border, I would say *No!* distinctly, No! And I wish every man in the United States to understand that to be my judgment and my purpose. . . .

Just before the commencement of the present administration, the resolutions for the annexation of Texas were passed in Congress. Texas complied with the provisions of those resolutions, and was here, or the case was here, on the 22d day of

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December, 1845, for her final admission into the Union as one of the States. I took occasion then to say that I thought there must be some limit to the extent of our territories, and that I wished this country should exhibit to the world the example of a powerful republic, without greediness or hunger of empire. And I added that, while I held with as much faithfulness as any citizen of the country to all the original arrangements and compromises of the Constitution under which we live, I never could, and I never should, bring myself to be in favor of the admission of any States into the Union as slaveholding States. . . .

If you bring in new States, any State that comes in must have two Senators. She may come in with fifty or sixty thousand people, or more. You may have from a particular State more Senators than you have Representatives. Can anything occur to disfigure and derange the form of government under which we live more signally than that? The Senate, augmented by these new Senators coming from States where there are few people, becomes an odious oligarchy. It holds power without any adequate constituency. . . .

Sir, I hardly dare trust myself. I don't know but that I may be under some delusion. It may be the weakness of my eyes that forms this monstrous apparition. But, if I may trust myself, if I can persuade myself that I am in my right mind, then it does appear to me that we in this Senate have been and are acting, and are likely to be acting hereafter, and immediately, a part which will form the most remarkable epoch in the history of our country. I hold it to be enormous, flagrant, an outrage upon all the principles of popular republican government, and on the elementary provisions of the Constitution under which we live, and which we have sworn to support. . . .

I think I see a course adopted which is likely to turn the Constitution of the land into a deformed monster, into a curse rather than a blessing; in fact, a frame of an unequal government, not founded on popular representation, not founded on equality, but on the grossest inequality; and I think that this process will go on, or that there is *danger* that it will go on, until this Union shall fall to pieces. I resist it, to-day and always. Whoever falters or whoever flies, I continue the contest!

I know, Sir, that all the portents are discouraging. Would to God I could auspicate good influences! Would to God that those who think with me, and myself, could hope for stronger support! Would that we could stand where we desire to stand!

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I see the signs are sinister. But with few, or alone, my position is fixed. If there were time I would gladly awaken the country. I believe the country might be awakened, although it may be too late. For myself, supported or unsupported, by the blessing of God, I shall do my duty. I see well enough all the adverse indications. But I am sustained by a deep and conscientious sense of duty; and, while supported by that feeling, and while such great interests are at stake, I defy auguries, and ask no omen but my country's cause!

Mr. Sanborn thinks, as he well may, that the alleged dishonest change in Webster's course, about which so much has been said, was not connected with the speech he made on the 7th of March, 1850, but with a speech which he did *not* make sometime in 1847 or 1848. The letter which Mr. Sanborn gives, from Mr. Sumner to Mr. Parker, is without date; but that letter evidently refers also to some speech that Webster did *not* make against the Mexican war. A part of Mr. Sumner's letter is as follows: "At the Senate I spoke with Giddings. He repeated what he had told me before, that Webster had submitted to him the brief of a speech against the Mexican war, which he never delivered." Now, whether Webster ever delivered the particular speech here referred to may be a question. But I submit that he could not well have made any fuller or stronger declarations against admitting any new slaveholding States and against all extension of slavery than we have in the forecited passages from his speeches in 1847 and 1848. Surely these passages must be enough to satisfy any candid and fair-minded man, that Webster did not then shirk the honest expression of his mind, from what Mr. Sumner was pleased to call "the paltriness of his office-seeking."

Probably the speech which Webster did not deliver, and of which a "skeleton" was shown to Mr. Giddings, was the one referred to in one of the forecited passages from the

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speech of March 23, 1848: "I was desirous of expressing my opinions against the object of these bills," etc. (page 170). And is not the reason which he there assigns, for not having made that intended speech, sufficient? especially in view of the speech he made on the 23d of March, 1848? One would think that even an unbenevolent mind might be satisfied with that reason.

Now, as nearly all the South were at that time manifestly bent on conquering new territory for the sole purpose of extending slavery, Webster, in his earnest and repeated protests and warnings against such extension, certainly had a very funny way of truckling, or of selling himself, for Southern votes. And as the imputing of bad motives, save "under a compelling occasion," is not generally regarded as a very high act of virtue, therefore we are bound in charity to presume that Mr. Sumner was strictly compelled to impute bad motives in that particular case. But it seems not unlikely that his undated letter to Mr. Parker may have been written before Webster's delivery of the speech which he had been obliged to postpone. Be that as it may, Mr. Sanborn had of course a perfect right to overlook or ignore the facts belonging to the matter in hand, and then speak just as if those facts were nonexistent. For it is clearly indispensable that Webster's character should somehow be put to death; and, where the end is so high and holy, it is evidently not worth the while to be at all scrupulous as to the means. Finally, in the case of Webster, *liberal* men, to be sure, must be allowed the special privilege of drawing upon their own imagination for the facts touching his action, and upon their own generous hearts, or *their* "inner consciousness," for *his* motives.

H. N. H.

CAMBRIDGE, January, 1882

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## III

At an anniversary meeting of the Massachusetts Anti-slavery Society, held in Faneuil Hall, on the 23d and 24th of January, 1850, a series of resolutions was adopted, one of which is as follows:

*Resolved*, That, admiring the fearlessness, the fidelity to principle, and the just discernment of slavery's true nature, and its chief strongholds, manifested by the great convention of Ohio's sons and daughters, assembled in September last at Berlin, in that State, we, the members and friends of the Massachusetts Anti-slavery Society, assembled in Faneuil Hall, do cordially respond to their words, and say with them, With full confidence in the integrity of our purpose and the justice of our cause, we do hereby declare ourselves the enemies of the Constitution, Union, and Government of the United States, and the friends of the new Confederacy of States, where there shall be no union with slaveholders, but where there shall ever be free soil, free labor, and free men; and we proclaim it as our unalterable purpose and determination to live and labor for a dissolution of the present Union, by all lawful and just, though bloodless and pacific, means, and for the formation of a new republic, that shall be such, not in name only, but in full living reality and truth. And we do hereby invite and entreat all our fellow-citizens and the friends of justice, humanity, and true liberty throughout the Northern States, to unite with us in laboring for so glorious an object.

Many pages might easily be filled with matter just like the above, all plainly demonstrating that the Abolitionists were at that time fierce disunionists, as much so as the "fire-eaters" of the South; and that the former, in common with the latter, were pushing on, with all their might, a scheme of "peaceable secession." How likely such secession was to be peaceable, was charmingly shown by our four smilingly peaceful years of civil war. The Abolitionists were then feeding themselves with eager hopes of a speedy

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disruption or "dissolution" of the Union. Those hopes were badly dashed by the passing of the Compromise Measures, which took place just when their patriotic and philanthropic fervor was at the white heat of intensity. This abundantly explains their amiable and benevolent virulence against Webster; for "Death loves a shining mark." To be sure, they had loved Webster mightily when he opposed Nullification and Secession in South Carolina; but they hated him with inexpressible bitterness when he opposed the same thing in Massachusetts: the case was then altered completely, of course; and so their milk instantaneously somersaulted into gall!

Upon a fair and candid view of the whole matter, the upshot seems to be about this: Webster was conscientiously loyal, the Abolitionists were conscientiously disloyal, to the Union and the Constitution; he thought the Union ought to be preserved, they thought it ought to be destroyed. Conscience was of course to be respected in them; and why not as much so in him? Wisdom, also, or moderation, if they had possessed it, would have been worthy of respect in them; Webster did possess it, and in him it was worthy of respect. In other words, the Abolitionists were honest, but they were fanatics; Webster, also, was honest, and was not a fanatic: this was just the difference between them. So, too, the proslavery fanatics of the South were no doubt just as honest as the antislavery fanatics of the North: on both sides the honesty was good; the fanaticism on both sides was bad.

One word more. The Abolitionists were eager and impatient to run the risk of setting the whole Nation on fire, in order to purge off a local and long-standing nuisance, which it was indeed unspeakably desirable to get rid of: Webster

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was deeply and most honorably anxious that the nuisance should be abated, as he believed it might and would be in time, without wrapping the Nation in flames. And, when the crisis came, the people of the North proved to be so far in sympathy with him, that they preferred an almost desperate civil war to the downfall of the Union. It is also to be said, in praise of the Abolitionists generally, that, when they found, as they did find, that the cause of the Union might become, and was likely to become, a mighty force for the destruction of slavery, they fell in heartily with the rest, cast off their disloyalty to the Union, turned earnest patriots, and worked nobly, none more so, in support of that cause. And it has really long seemed to me that, now that the struggle is a thing of the past, and passion has had time to cool, the old Abolitionists, above all other people in the land, frankly discarding the animosities of thirty years ago, ought to love and honor the name of Daniel Webster. Surely they owe him that reparation; and they owe it even more to themselves than to him! And I am the rather moved to say this, inasmuch as, during those long-past years, I was myself in full sympathy with their hatred of slavery.

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# NOTES

*The figures in heavy-faced type refer to pages; those in plain type, to the lines which are annotated.*

## PREFACE TO SCHOOL HAMLET

**3** 15 **I still adhere** etc.: This subject is somewhat unsettled in the minds of the best editors and teachers, but there can be no doubt that from his point of view Professor Hudson is right. The revised Hudson edition retains the notes at the foot of the page. These notes are of three kinds: the first gives all the important textual variants from the quartos and folios; the second deals with obscure words and passages; and the third gives types of æsthetic interpretation from the best sources.

**4** 18–21 **And perhaps the tendency** etc.: This tendency has somewhat increased since Professor Hudson's time, to the injury of English teaching, for too often it has led the teacher to rely upon such notes for recitational purposes rather than upon individual initiative to reach the message of the text. This is always deadening in its effect. Mr. Alfred Ainger says: "A student might obtain full marks in such an exercise without its proving that he or she was any better, wiser, or happier for any of the literature of which it treats."

**5** 20 **Critical Notes**: At the present time, when cheap reprints of the early texts are accessible, it is possible and desirable to lead the student in the secondary schools to take an interest in the Folios and Quartos.

**6** 10–12 **I hold** etc.: Here is the essence of Professor Hudson's creed as to the teaching of English literature. It is interesting to note that all the great teachers of the present time agree with him. Dr. James Martineau says: "To teach us what to love and what to hate, whom to honor and whom to despise, is the substance of human training; and I would rather have an hour's communion



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with one noble soul than to read the law of gravitation through and through."

"In England, most especially, and at its university centers, this agitation (of the place of literature in liberal studies) has become intense and demonstrative, arousing both scholarly and popular interest, and bidding fair, even now, to revolutionize, in the British Empire, all educational conceptions hitherto held." — PROFESSOR T. W. HUNT.

**6** 18–19 **The world is getting** etc.: President Woodrow Wilson says of such authors: "The trouble is they all want to be 'in society,' overwhelmed with invitations from the publishers, well known and talked about at the clubs, named every day in the newspapers, photographed for the news stalls."

**7** 24–28 **And the æsthetic criticism** etc.: There is no doubt that the æsthetic criticism of Professor Hudson has done more for the study of Shakespeare in this country than all the verbal criticism published. Dr. H. H. Furness wrote to Professor Hudson in 1879: "You stand *facile princeps* among living writers in the domain of Shakespeare æsthetic criticism. Your chapter on the morality of Shakespeare is the finest piece of æsthetic criticism that has been written in our day, or in any day."

**8** 20–23 **We seem indeed** etc.: Speaking of such a pupil, Mr. Alfred Ainger says: "He is eager at once to exercise his judgment, his critical powers; to be able quickly to give a reason for the faith that is in him. Let him not be in a hurry. *Love* must come first, *criticism* afterwards."

**9** 11–13 **Thus in our hot haste** etc.: This paragraph seems very modern, although it was written more than a quarter of a century ago. Browning, in his "What Does, what Knows, what Is; three souls, one man," reveals the threefold nature of all of us. Unless each of these natures is developed harmoniously, serious results follow.

**10** 13–14 **One would suppose** etc.: The truth of this paragraph is finely illustrated in Dr. Martineau's "The Child's Thought" and Bishop Brooks's "The Beautiful Gate of the Temple," two sermons upon the education of the child which no teacher should fail to study. Dr. Martineau says: "If both world and church will only learn what the child's simple presence may teach, instead of

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teaching what he cannot innocently learn, the truth may dawn upon them that he seldom requires to be led, — only not to be *misled*." Bishop Brooks says: "Every child is a separate and peculiar plant, — different from every other. What shall the teacher do, then? Not say, 'I will make this child before me this or that,' but, 'I will quicken every activity with its own spiritual stimulus.'"

**11** 5–8 **What a teacher, therefore** etc.: That we are getting some results from such teaching as Professor Hudson urges in this paragraph is evident from what President Woodrow Wilson says of the reform in teaching at Princeton. "The new method is founded on the proposition that a university is a place where men go to read great subjects of study, and to be assisted by friendly preceptors who ought to be stimulating and instructive. Not uniformity, but elasticity of method is wanted." "The literary pedant," says Professor T. W. Hunt, "emphasizing names and dates and the minutest matters of an author's life, is one type; the literary guide and master, bringing to light great generic principles in literature and illustrating its relation to all high forms of mental discipline, is quite another type, and the only worthy one."

**12** 4–6 **Hence, no doubt,** etc.: The truth of this, applied to the general tendency of our time to diffuseness, is aptly illustrated by Mr. R. H. Hutton, who says: "A perfect organization of facilities for expression carries off far too soon everything in the shape of literary feeling and thought into the public mind without giving it time to grow to what is great and forcible. . . . It is the damming up of driblets of thought and feeling which really creates great supplies of such thought and feeling. The age of reserve prepares the way for the age of literary splendour."

**13** 22 **For the learning of words** etc.: President Woodrow Wilson says: "It is not knowledge that moves the world, but ideals, convictions, and whoever studies humanity ought to study it alive, practice the vivisection of reading literature, and acquaint himself with something more than anatomies which are no longer in use by spirits." Professor T. W. Hunt says: "Literature has been so held in abeyance by classical educators to the study of linguistics that it has been sacrificed in the house of its friends."

**14** 25–27 **A constant dissecting** etc.: In speaking of the scientific method President Woodrow Wilson says: "If you do so limit and

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constrain what you teach, you thrust taste and insight and delicacy of perception quite out of the schools . . ., make education an affair of tasting and handling and smelling, and so create Philistia, that country in which they speak of 'mere literature.'"

**16** 16–19 **I was convinced** etc.: These lines reveal the cause of the lack of interest in many English class rooms in school and college. The recitation of the secondary school and the lecture in the college are too often merely mechanical devices to go through the hour, while they offer bounties to the one who can cram and disgorge. It is small wonder that Professor William James attacked the Ph.D. Octopus and its destructive effect upon the imagination. Professor Hugo Münsterberg, in his address at the dedication of Emerson Hall, Harvard University, said that while the psychologist by research might gather all material possible, he would not know what to do with it unless he had imagination. Mr. Herbert Paul says: "Specialists have substituted for the old idea of a liberal education a multitude of narrow and technical schools for cramming the memory and starving the intellect." Mr. A. C. Benson says: "We continue to respect the erudite mind, and to decry the appreciative spirit as amateurish and dilettante, but omniscience is not even desirable in the ordinary mind."

**17** 16–17 **For these reasons** etc.: The method which Professor Hudson used makes the greatest demands upon the teacher, for he must first of all know literature, and he must not parade his knowledge before the class. He must act as a guide to the delightful country, but must not *lecture* on its beauties; he must allow the class to do its own seeing.

A significant testimony to this method is given by Dr. H. H. Furness in a letter to Professor Hudson. He writes: "I am filled with measureless content when I reflect how much my boys will owe to you of their introduction to Shakespeare. They always mention your exercises in their letters, with great and increasing interest. After all, I am not sure that such a school as that [St. Paul's, Concord, New Hampshire] does not constitute the finest audience a man can have, the echoes of his voice will float farther down the tide of time, and no computation can estimate the fruit which the seed then sown may produce."

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## ENGLISH IN SCHOOLS

**19** 21–23 **Then too most of the pupils** etc.: One of the greatest problems of modern secondary education is how to furnish the type of training for the city-bred boy and girl which life on the farm gave to the country boy and girl. As yet no mechanic arts school, or school of domestic science, has been created to do this work. As Senator Hoar says: "There was never a better gymnasium for body or mind and soul; there was never a fitter preparation for college or university, or for the greater university of the world, than the life from the early settlement of the country down to a day most of us can remember, on a New England farm. What an education in the old days when the thick wood came up close to the village; when the boys' schoolmates were the hawk and the owl, and the raccoon and the muskrat. In those days when a boy wanted to have a thing done he had to do it for himself. He had to keep his eyes and his ears open to Nature's constant challenge from wood and field and river and pond. The pickerel in the pond, the muskrat in the river, the hawk in the sky, the woodchuck in his hole, and the gray squirrel on the tree top were calling to him, 'Get me if you can.'"

**21** 17–19 **And, good as vocal intelligence may be** etc.: We are now acknowledging the truth of this idea, for we have been taught it by the superior efficiency of the German in all that pertains to the crafts, an efficiency which is due to a right relation of mind and hand.

**21** 25–28 **But I suspect** etc.: Ruskin says: "I am always struck by the precedence which the idea of 'a position in life' takes above all other thoughts in the parents' — more especially in the mothers' — minds. The education befitting such and such a *station* in life, — this is the phrase, this the object, always. They never seek, so far as I can make out, an education good in itself. It never seems to occur to these parents that there may be an education which *is* advancement in life."

**23** 28–31 **For, surely, the two parts of education** etc.: This is being practically worked out in those schools where manual training is made a part of the regular curriculum of the school, not a side issue quite unrelated to the main idea of education.

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**24** 26–27 **And here let me say** etc.: Honorable John D. Long, in an address at Vassar College in 1905, said: "No one can look at modern society and not be appalled at the outrage and indignities being committed in all walks of life. It is in this mass of festering sores that our danger lies. I look to see a new infusion of culture and charm given to the world by the educated woman. It is her mission to save human society from vulgarity and decay. If she train up her husband and children to simple living, civilization will go forward in this country."

**25** 11–12 **Our girls in school** etc.: Tennyson makes this idea central in *The Princess*. In speaking of his mother, he says:

> One
> Not learned, save in gracious household ways,
> Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants,
> No Angel, but a dearer being, all dipt
> In Angel instincts, breathing Paradise,
> Interpreter between the Gods and men,
> Who look'd all native to her place, and yet
> On tiptoe seem'd to touch upon a sphere
> Too gross to tread, and all male minds perforce
> Sway'd to her from their orbits as they moved,
> And girdled her with music. Happy he
> With such a mother!
>
> Canto VII, 299–309.

**26** 7–8 **This leisure** etc.: President Woodrow Wilson says: "If this free people to which we belong is to keep its fine spirit, its perfect temper amidst affairs, its high courage in face of difficulties, its wise temperateness and wide-eyed hope, it must continue to drink deep and often from the old wells of English undefiled, quaff the keen tonic of its best ideals, keep its blood warm with all the great utterances of exalted purpose and pure principle of which its matchless literature is full. The great spirits of the past must command us in the tasks of the future, mere literature will keep us pure and keep us strong."

**26** 30 **And this is quite as true** etc.: Mr. J. M. Barrie says: "When you looked into my mother's eyes, you knew why it was God sent her into the world: to open the eyes of all who look to beautiful thoughts, and this is the beginning and end of literature."

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**27** 3–6 **I suspect** etc.: Mr. Frederic Harrison says: "When will men understand that the reading of great books is a faculty to be acquired, not a natural gift, at least not to those who are spoiled by our current education and habits of life? An insatiable appetite for new novels makes it as hard to read a masterpiece as it seems to a Parisian boulevardier to live in a quiet country. Until a man can truly enjoy a draft of clear water bubbling from a mountain side, his taste is in an unwholesome state."

**28** 1–3 **I say pleasure** etc.: I have always maintained that the English hour in the class room should be an hour of recreation for pupil and teacher. Mr. Alfred Ainger says: "Only through some pleasure given, I venture to assert, is any profit afforded by the study of an English writer. . . . The great end then, I submit, of English literature as an element of education is to give *pleasure*." Mr. A. C. Benson says: "A man who reads Virgil for pleasure is a better result of a system of education than one who re-edits *Tibullus*."

**29** 3–7 **The thing is** etc.: Mr. Frederic Harrison says: "The choice of books is really the choice of an education, of a moral and intellectual ideal, of the whole duty of man."

**29** 17–21 **If people have their tastes** etc.: Mr. Augustine Birrell says: "If, then, we would possess good taste, we must take pains about it. We must study models, we must follow examples. . . . The best way of telling a good book from a bad one is to make yourself as well acquainted as you can with some of the great literary models. . . . A great crowd of books is as destructive of the literary instinct, which is a highly delicate thing, as is a London evening party of the social instinct."

**30** 5–7 **The direct aids and inspirations** etc.: Dr. Martineau says: "Knowledge bears a double fruit — a physical and a moral. It enables us to *do more*, and disposes us to *be better*. But it is not the same kind of knowledge that effects both of these results. We increase our power by knowing objects that are beneath us; our goodness, by knowing those that are above us."

**30** 28–**31** 5 **That an author** etc.: President Woodrow Wilson says: "Those writings which we reckon worthy of the name of literature are the product not of reasoned thought, but of the imagination and of the spiritual vision of those who see, — writings winged not with knowledge but with sympathy, with sentiment, with heartiness."

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Professor T. W. Hunt says: "What is wanting in these commercial and practical days is the spiritual and immortal view of letters, — the exaltation and realization of the ideal in literature as distinct from the visible, tangible, and merely mercenary."

**31** 23–25 **Nor is it the least benefit** etc.: Mr. J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps writes to Professor Hudson in April, 1881: "My most hearty thanks for the *English in Schools*. What you say is full of interest and of the greatest importance. I am just starting for Stratford-on-Avon and intend to reread it in Shakespeare's own town. Your able and eloquent edition of *Henry VIII* I am charmed with. It came just in time for me to quote a bit from your introduction in a new book just completed which I shall have the pleasure of sending you."

**32** 28–31 **The statistics of our public libraries** etc.: Recent reports from the Boston Public Library are very suggestive, and show clearly that the conditions are encouraging. They reveal that an increasing proportion of great poetry is being called for.

**33** 12–17 **Yet, in the matter of practical learning** etc.: "A man of sensitive imagination and elevated moral sense, of a wide knowledge and capacity for affairs, Burke stood in the midst of the English nation speaking its moral judgments upon affairs, its character in political action, its purposes of freedom, equity, wide and equal progress. It is the immortal charm of his speech and manner that gives permanence to his works. He is a master in the use of the great style." — PRESIDENT WOODROW WILSON.

**33** 18–24 **And a few of Webster's** etc.: "If ever being walked the earth clad in the panoply of imperial manhood, it was Daniel Webster. If ever being trod the earth whom the Greek or Roman fable would have made a demigod, it was this child of the New Hampshire farmhouse. His sentences dwell and abide with us like the psalms of David or the songs of Burns." — GEORGE F. HOAR.

**34** 14–16 **Few, very few** etc.: "In our race are thousands of readers, presently there will be millions, who know not a word of Greek or Latin, and will never learn these languages. If this host of readers are ever to gain any sense of the power and charm of the great poets of antiquity, their way to gain it is not through translations of the ancients, but through the original poetry of Milton." — MATTHEW ARNOLD.

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**34** 28–31 **I suspect** etc.: This is as true now as it was when Professor Hudson uttered it. The testimony of all those who have made themselves familiar with the teaching of literature in the schools is that it is the one subject which is taught almost uniformly badly. "Mere literature," says President Woodrow Wilson, "is not an expression of form, but an expression of spirit. This is a fugitive and troublesome thing, and perhaps does not belong in well-conceived plans of universal instruction; for it offers many embarrassments to the pedagogic method. It escapes all scientific categories. It is not pervious to research. It is too wayward to be brought under the discipline of exposition."

**36** 9–12 **How strange it is, then** etc.: It must be remembered that when these words were written there was no study of Shakespeare or the English classics in our secondary schools, and but little in the colleges. The impulse to such study came more largely from Professor Hudson, his teaching and writing, than from any other source.

**36** 25–27 **Nevertheless I am far from thinking** etc.: This is essentially the position taken by every great teacher of English and, I might almost say, of every great teacher of Science, at the present time.

Professor Edward Dowden says: "If English literature be connected in our courses with Greek, Latin, French, or German literature, the thoughtful student can hardly fail to be aroused by the comparative studies to consider questions which demand an answer from philosophy." Cf. Professor Hugo Münsterberg, *Science and Idealism*.

**37** 16–19 **The fashion indeed has been growing** etc.: Mr. Frederic Harrison says: "Assiduous practice in composing neat essays has turned out of late ten thousand men and women who can put together very pleasant prose. It has not turned out one living master in prose as Tennyson was master in verse. . . . The young student — *ex hypothesi* — has to learn, not to teach. His duty is to digest knowledge, not to popularize it and carry it abroad."

**38** 26–29 **And so the secret of a good style** etc.: "What you need is, not a critical knowledge of language, but a quick feeling for it. You must immerse your thought in your phrase, till each becomes saturated with the other. And you must produce in color, with the touch of imagination, which lifts what you write away from the dull levels of mere exposition." — PRESIDENT WOODROW WILSON.

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**41** 27–29 **In short** etc.: Fortunately we have made a great gain in this matter during the last decade. Wherever English has had a fair chance in our secondary schools, it assumes a position of dignity and power second to no subject in the curriculum.

**43** 6–9 **The chronic nervous intensity** etc.: Professor William James, in his *Talks on Psychology and Life's Ideals*, — a splendid recent corroboration of Dr. Hudson's ideas on education, — says: "We say that so many of our fellow-countrymen collapse, and have to be sent abroad to rest their nerves, because they work so hard. I suspect that this is an immense mistake. I suspect that neither the nature nor the amount of their work is accountable for the frequency and severity of our breakdowns, but that their cause lies rather in those absurd feelings of hurry and having no time, in that breathlessness and tension, that anxiety of feature and that solicitude for results, that lack of inner harmony and ease, in short, by which with us the work is so apt to be accompanied, and from which a European who should do the same work would nine times out of ten be free."

**46** 21–24 **Nor would I attempt** etc.: "It is through the subject-matter that the interest of students can be best maintained, and if so maintained, whatever incidental instruction may be called for (and to be called for, it must be relevant to the subject-matter) will tell the better upon them. But even if relevant it must not be allowed to divert the current of thought and feeling into standing pools." — PROFESSOR HIRAM CORSON.

**47** 2–4 **For such delight** etc.: President Woodrow Wilson, in speaking of the deadening results of too much emphasis upon details as revealed in the methods called scientific, says: "We must not be impatient of this truant child of fancy (the spirit of mere literature). When the schools cast her out, she will stand in need of friendly succor. We must be free hearted in order to make her happy, for she will accept entertainment of no sober, prudent fellow who shall counsel her to mend her ways. She has always made light of hardships, and she has never loved or obeyed any save those who were of her own mind, those who were indulgent to her humors, responsive to her ways of thought, attentive to her whims, content with her 'mere' charms. She already has her small following of devotees, like all charming, capricious mistresses. There are some

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still who think that to know her is better than a liberal education."

**47** 23–29 **From all which it follows** etc.: The new requirements for college entrance examination in English have done much to rid the schools of scrappy texts. We are now studying authors as individuals revealed through their works. This requires the use of single texts rather than aggregations covering long periods of time.

"Students are not kept long enough in contact with the inner life of English Letters to take in something of that spirit that pervades them." — PROFESSOR T. W. HUNT.

**48** 17–19 **As for the matter of rhetoric** etc.: The place of formal rhetoric in the school and the college is a subject of much discussion. I believe that too much pressure put upon it before the student becomes familiar with the great prose writers leads to mischief, in that it results in a belief, on the part of the student, that rhetoric is the cause of literary workmanship; whereas, if it be postponed to a period when great prose can be used as illustrating the principles both of logic and rhetoric, the student sees at once that the laws of each only reveal the manner in which the author was in the habit of thinking. The testimony of men of letters on the subject is to the point. Mr. John Morley says: "I have very little faith in rules of style, though I have an unbounded faith in the virtue of cultivating direct and precise expression. But you must carry on the operation inside the mind, and not merely practice literary deportment on paper. So far as my observation has gone, men will do better if they seek precision by studying carefully and with an open mind and a vigilant eye the great models of writing, than by excessive practice of writing on their own account."

Mr. Frederic Harrison says: "The bare art of writing readable paragraphs in passable English is easy enough to master. But it is a poor art which readily lends itself to harm. It leads the shallow ones to suppose themselves deep, the raw ones to fancy they are cultured, and it burdens the world with a deluge of facile commonplace."

Mr. Leslie Stephen says: "I have often heard remarks upon the modern diffusion of literary skill. Ten people, it is said, can write well now for one who could write well fifty years ago. No doubt the demand for facile writing has enormously increased the supply. But

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I do not think that first-rate writing — the writing which speaks of a full mind and strong convictions, which is clear because it is thorough not because it is shallow — has increased in the same proportion; if, indeed, we can be sure that it has increased at all. Perhaps there are ten times as many people who can put other men's thoughts into fine phrases; but are there ten times as many, are there even as many, who think for themselves and speak at first hand?"

**50** 10–12 **Unquestionably the right way** etc.: Mr. James Russell Lowell says: "One is sometimes asked by young people to recommend a course of 'reading.' My advice would be that they should confine themselves to the supreme books in whatever literature, or still better, to choose some one great author, and make themselves thoroughly familiar with him. . . . This method forces upon us the necessity of thinking, which is, after all, the highest result of all education."

**50** 26–28 **It is indeed sometimes urged** etc.: Mr. James Russell Lowell says: "We are apt to wonder at the scholarship of the men of three centuries ago, and at a certain dignity of phrase that characterizes them. They were scholars because they did not read so many things as we. They had fewer books, but these were of the best. Their speech was noble because they lunched with Plutarch and supped with Plato."

**52** 15–18 **So let our youth** etc.: "Of all our study the last end and aim should be to ascertain how a great writer or artist has served the life of man; to ascertain this, to bring home to ourselves as large a portion as may be of the gain wherewith he has enriched human life." — EDWARD DOWDEN.

## SHAKESPEARE AS A TEXT-BOOK

**54** 18–20 **The plays, in all cases** etc.: The matter of expurgation is of the greatest importance where the plays are to be read aloud in the class room. Professor Hudson managed this with consummate skill and sound judgment.

**58** 29–30 **Especially I make much of reading** etc.: Professor Hiram Corson says: "In literary examinations a sufficiently qualified teacher could arrive at a nicer and more certain estimate of what

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a student has appropriated, both intellectually and spiritually, of a literary product, by requiring him to read it, than he could arrive at by any amount of catechising."

**61** 3–5 **As to exercises in the Poet's versification** etc.: Much insight into the poet's art of versification may be acquired by simple exercises in reading it aloud, by comparing his verse with that of other great poets, and by studying such a simple explanation of it as that given in Professor Dowden's *Primer of Shakespeare.* I believe that exercises in writing verse are of great value in teaching the tonic resources of language, its flexibility, its wealth, its suggestiveness, and its power of revealing feelings of joy and grief, pity and pathos, love and hate. By such exercises the student's vocabulary will become richer, his habits of expression more dignified, his taste more refined, and his imagination quickened.

## HOW TO USE SHAKESPEARE IN SCHOOL

**63** 9–14 **And in the first place** etc.: "Method" has been the word of our teachers of pedagogy, and it has been insisted upon with such force that too often the young teacher is found imitating the method of a successful instructor at the expense of his own initiative. The personal element in the teacher, his interest, enthusiasm, and devotion, will seldom fail of good results.

**66** 19–24 **And both they and I know** etc.: Dr. H. H. Furness wrote to Professor Hudson: "I work for my own satisfaction and the glory of Shakespeare, and if, as the outcome of all my labor, a new edition and a better emerges out of mine, wherein no reference to my toil is found, I should have no feeling but that of grateful delight."

**67** 7–9 **Now such a love** etc.: Professor Edward Dowden says: "An intelligent examiner will give a preference to questions which do more than test the memory. There is a class of questions which serve as a test of close and intelligent reading, and also give the student an opportunity of showing whether he has exercised what I may call the faculty of imaginative realization."

**70** 5–9 **In the first place, I never have had** etc.: Every exercise in English literature ought to be made vital by bringing the pupils into touch with the personality which created the work in hand, by correlating the principles and ideals it contains with the life of the

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present, by revealing that literature is not a storehouse of facts, but a reservoir of truths, the appreciation of which constitutes our true being. Such exercises are not concerned with the intellectual activity called acquirement, but with the spiritual activity called culture. Often the colleges do not know what kind of work in the study of literature the best schools are doing. Not long ago a club composed of masters of English in the secondary schools called the attention of the Harvard examiners to the technical character of the questions set for entrance in English, and asked that a fair proportion of the questions should test the student's ability to read with insight and appreciation, — a sense of literary values, — rather than his knowledge of details. If one compares the Harvard examinations in English in 1894 with those of 1904–1905, one will readily see the result of this conference.

President Hadley has said that if the secondary schools continued to send to Yale students with a confirmed dislike for English studies, he would withdraw the entrance requirements in English, as the instructors would rather deal with those students who had no special appreciation of literature than with those who had formed a dislike for it. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology, under the leadership of President Pritchett, has come to recognize the importance of academic studies in technical work, and now asks of a pupil who presents himself for admission in English, "Ability to express himself in writing at once clear and accurate, and power to distinguish in a broad sense literary values, — the qualities which mark a work as being Literature."

These advances show clearly that the ideals which Professor Hudson held important have now an honorable recognition in the greatest colleges and universities. The establishment of the Honor School in Literature and History by Harvard University is one of the most significant movements in modern education in this country, and will take rank with that of the Preceptorial system at Princeton. Both of these have for their ideal not scientific research, but rather the cultivation of taste, delicacy, and insight by association with those who possessed them without ever being able to pass a creditable examination on the question, "Where did you get them?" The student is required to submit himself to a teacher, and to ask no question as to the secret of his influence. This method is a

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recognition of Mr. Leslie Stephen's teaching, that "all criticism not rooted in history is a nuisance and a parasitic growth upon literature."

**71** 1–6 **And I make a good deal of having the Poet's lines read properly** etc.: Shakespeare's frequent allusions to those qualities of the human voice which give it pathos, charm, and power, reveal the fact that he was responsive to its attractions.

Professor Hiram Corson says: "There is evidence in the Plays that, in composition, Shakespeare must either have heard imaginatively what he was writing, or have actually voiced his language as he went along. He did not write for the eye, but for the ear."

**75** 5–10 **In fact, I cleave rather fondly** etc.: I know of no teacher of English literature in this country of whom his pupils oftener think with pleasure and speak with delight than Dr. Hudson.

**83** 17–18 **And, if the thing** etc.: To some this may seem like putting the case too emphatically, but those familiar with teaching will, I think, agree with Dr. Hudson. Fortunately we are now giving more attention to the physical training of girls; we are making less of the examination — especially of that type which admits of cramming — and more of that training which develops power of thought and imagination.

## PREFACE TO THE HARVARD EDITION OF SHAKESPEARE

**87** 1–5 **The most obvious peculiarity** etc.: Cf. note **3** 15, page 177.

**87** 21–22 **It scarce need be said** etc.: The Revised Hudson Shakespeare furnishes the special student with more critical and textual matter than the original, while it does not present so much as to discourage the general reader. Mr. P. A. Daniel, the author of *A Time Analysis of the Plots of Shakespeare's Plays*, in the New Shakespeare Society Papers, Series I, and *Notes and Emendations*, wrote to Dr. Hudson as follows: "To my fancy the common reader wants no notes interspersed with the text: they but distract his attention from the subject which should exclusively engage it. . . . Your edition will probably lead many to the critical study of the text and will probably satisfy the popular demand." Mr. J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps, author of *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare*,

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etc., wrote: "The division of the excellent notes into two sets is a splendid arrangement that alone would give character to the work."

**88** 19–22 **This edition** etc.: Mr. P. A. Daniel wrote: "Of the immense labor, care, and knowledge of the subject you have displayed — or rather, I should say, *concealed* — in the preparation of the text, each page is witness, and all who know anything of the difficulties which beset the path of an editor of Shakespeare will, I am sure, appreciate the result."

**89** 6–9 **For it has long been a settled axiom** etc.: Mr. Matthew Arnold says: "We should conceive of poetry worthily, and more highly than it has been the custom to conceive it. We should conceive of it as capable of higher uses, and called to higher destinies than those which in general men have assigned to it hitherto. More and more mankind will discover that we turn to poetry to interpret life for us, to console us, to sustain us."

**90** 19–21 **These remarks, I believe** etc.: In ordering a set of this edition sent to the English Shakespeare Memorial Library, and the Library of the German Shakespeare Society, Dr. Horace Howard Furness wrote: "I scarcely know how I can better show my high appreciation of this noble edition than by placing it where English and German scholars can have free access to it and learn from it the wealth of love and learning which in this country is dedicated to Shakespeare." Professor Dowden wrote: "Hudson's edition takes its place beside the best work of English Shakespeare students." Mr. F. J. Furnivall, in his introduction to *The Leopold Shakespeare*, said: "In Shakesperean criticism, Gervinus of Heidelberg, Dowden of Dublin, and Hudson of Boston are the students' best guides that we have." Mr. J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps wrote: "The Harvard edition has given me the greatest treat that I have had for many a day, and I can hardly express how much pleasure it affords me to possess so admirable a work, edited as it is with such exceptional ability and knowledge." The above are but a few of the opinions of the eminent Shakespeareans who expressed to Dr. Hudson their appreciation of his great work.

**91** 22–30 **Therewithal, the Poet** etc.:

> Others abide our question. Thou art free.
> We ask and ask — Thou smilest and art still,
> Out-topping knowledge. . . .

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All pains the immortal Spirit must endure,
All weakness which impairs, all griefs which bow,
Find their sole speech in that victorious brow.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

**92** 19–24 **And here it is of the first importance** etc.: One who reads Dr. Hudson's *Shakespeare's Life, Art, and Characters* will be impressed with the directness, originality, and vigor of style, — the unique power of putting things clearly.

**94** 11–16 **It is the instinct** etc.: Professor Dowden says: "Our prime object (in reading) should be to get into living relation with a man; and by this means, with the good forces of nature and humanity which play in and through him. This aim condemns all reading for pride and vainglory as wholly astray, and all reading for scholarship and specialized knowledge as partial and insufficient. We must not read for these, but for *life;* we must read in order to live."

**95** 9–15 **Small points and issues** etc.: Mr. J. Churton Collins says: "Literature has been regarded (in the schools) not as the expression of art and genius, but as mere material for the study of words, as mere pabulum for philology; and the teaching of it has failed for the same reason that 'Classics' have failed. It has failed not because it affords no material profitable for teaching, but because we pervert it into material for unprofitable teaching."

**96** 8–10 **Thus Shakespeare** etc.: Fortunately we are now returning to the old habit of reading the Bible as a revelation of a national literature, although such a reading of it is deemed heretical by the severely orthodox. Can the Bible become less influential by being read with interest and pleasure as literature? After a somewhat extended experience with pupils in secondary schools and in college, I can testify that when thus read and correlated with other great literatures it becomes a source of unique educational power.

**97** 21–24 **It seems to be presumed** etc.: In regard to this matter President Woodrow Wilson wrote me: "I heartily agree with all that you say about the teaching of English literature. No method 'made in Germany' can ever get at the heart of our great literature, and by using such methods we are cheating ourselves out of a great heritage, stupidly if not deliberately." Mr. J. Churton Collins says: "The instincts and faculties which separate the temperament

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of the mathematician from the temperament of the poet are not more radical and essential than the instincts and faculties which separate the sympathetic student of Philology from the sympathetic student of Polite Literature. And of all the sciences Philology is the most repugnant to men of artistic and literary taste."

**98** 27–30 **such, for instance** etc.: Every student of Shakespeare feels the truth of Dr. Hudson's praise of these noble monuments to American scholarship.

The other famous Variorum editions are: Isaac Reed's, based on Steevens's work of 1773, and published in twenty-one volumes in 1803; that of James Boswell, the son of Johnson's biographer, based on Malone's edition of 1790, and published in twenty-one volumes in 1821.

**100** 6–8 **Copies of these editions** etc.: "The largest collections of the original Quartos — each of which only survives in four, five, or six copies — are in the libraries of the Duke of Devonshire, the British Museum, in Trinity College, Cambridge, and in the Bodleian Library. Perfect copies range in price, according to their rarity, from £200 to £300." — SIDNEY LEE. Inexpensive facsimiles of these Quartos are now accessible.

**100** 25 **folio of 1623.** Cf. *A Primer of Shakespeare*, Edward Dowden; *A Life of William Shakespeare*, Sidney Lee, page 303.

**101** 23–24 **In their "Address to the Readers"** etc.: Cf. *Famous Introductions to Shakespeare's Plays* by B. Warner.

**102** 9–10 **The folio was reprinted** etc.: These are known as the Second, Third, and Fourth Folios respectively, and designated as $F_2$, $F_3$, $F_4$.

**102** 24 **"Collier's second folio"**: Cf. Sidney Lee's various allusions to Collier's work in *A Life of William Shakespeare*.

**104** 4–7 **The labors** etc.: Mr. A. C. Swinburne says: "The greatest poet of our age has drawn a parallel of elaborate eloquence between Shakespeare and the sea; and the likeness holds good in many points of less significance than those which have been set down by a master hand. For two hundred years at least have students of every kind put forth in every sort of boats on a longer or shorter voyage of research across the waters of that unsounded sea. . . . There are shoals and quicksands on which many a seafarer has run his craft aground in times past, and others of more

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special peril to adventurers of the present day. At one time a main rock of offense on which the stoutest ships of discovery were wont to split was the narrow and slippery reef of verbal emendation: and upon this our native pilots were too many of them prone to steer. Others fell becalmed offshore in a German fog of philosophic theories."

**104** 21–24 **His text** etc.: This sentiment is even more common now than in Dr. Hudson's time, and the tendency of modern editors is to return to the text of the Folios and Quartos. In revising the text of Hudson's Shakespeare changes have been made mainly in favor of the early editions.

**105** 15–16 **The work of ascertaining** etc.: Rowe has the distinction of being the first biographer of Shakespeare, and what he included in his sketch still remains as essentially all that we know in regard to the poet's life. His text was based upon that of the Fourth Folio and has no special value. His greatest service was in preparing a list of Dramatis Personæ and dividing the plays into acts and scenes.

**105** 17–19 **The work was continued by Pope**: Pope was Shakespeare's second editor (1725). He made many textual changes in the edition of Rowe, and also improved on Rowe's arrangement of scenes.

**105** 19 **Pope was followed by Theobald**: The war of the critics began with Theobald's vigorous attack upon Pope in 1726 for his freedom with the text. Mr. Sidney Lee calls Theobald "the most inspired of all the textual critics of Shakespeare." He based his text on the First Folio, and by far the larger part of his emendations have become generally adopted. Professor Hudson had the greatest respect for him, and the principles he lays down as to the handling of Shakespeare's text are in the vein of this great editor.

**105** 21 **Hanmer's edition**: This edition was published in 1744 at the Oxford University Press. Hanmer did not indulge in abuse of previous editors, but arranged the text to suit himself, quite disregarding the old copies.

**105** 21 **Warburton's**: Bishop Warburton published a revised version of Pope's edition in 1747. The Bishop espoused the cause of Pope and attacked Rowe, Theobald, and Hanmer. His canons of criticism have been recognized as eminently sound and sagacious.

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In 1881 Mr. C. M. Ingleby wrote to Professor Hudson: "Karl Elze and I differ *in toto* about Bishop Warburton. I am pleased to see that you do honor to the great critic, second only, I think, to Theobald."

**105 23 Johnson**: In 1765 Dr. Johnson published his edition, in which he reviewed the work of previous editors with a somewhat arrogant criticism. The preface contains some of the most valuable suggestions as to notes to works of literary art and the value of first-hand acquaintance with authors.

**105 23 Capell**: Edward Capell, in his edition of 1768, made careful collation of the Quartos and First and Second Folios. In scholarly and painstaking work he resembled Theobald.

**105 23 Steevens**: In 1766 Steevens printed twenty plays from the Quartos and correlated contemporary literature with that of Shakespeare; and in 1773 he revised Johnson's edition. He played so many pranks with the text that he was called the "Puck of Commentators."

**105 24 Malone**: Edmund Malone was the last of the great editors of the eighteenth century. He stoutly maintained that the First Folio had a far greater value as authority on text than any other. He was the first of the critics to attempt a proper chronological order of the plays.

The prefaces to these editions, from the Folio of 1623 to that of Malone, have been recently published in a single volume, with an introduction by Mr. Beverly Warner. It is a book of great value to students of literary history.

**108 21–24 Certainly changes in the old text** etc.: In his earliest edition Professor Hudson took some liberties in this matter of text which caused him to be looked upon as extremely radical, but in his later work he was more conservative.

The following extracts from letters from his coworkers in England reveal in what esteem he was held as a textual critic. Mr. P. A. Daniel wrote: "Although on some matters of detail I might differ from you, yet on the whole I offer you my hearty congratulations." Mr. J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps wrote: "There are some points upon which I don't agree with you, but that, of course, you will expect. Different minds can never quite agree on many points, especially of

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authorship." Mr. C. M. Ingleby wrote: "We should have to cross swords, in honor not in hate, many times in the course of a play. The spirit of the whole is good and right; and you sway your scepter with a dignified fairness which is delightful."

The distinguished English Shakespearean, Professor Edward Dowden of Dublin, sends me an interesting and suggestive estimate of Dr. Hudson's work. He says: "Hudson seems to me to take a very high place among critics who have interpreted the genius and the art of Shakespeare. He is both comprehensive and penetrating, is alive both to the ethical and the æsthetic aspects of Shakespeare's work; and he enters in a genial way into the study of character in the tragedies, historical plays, and comedies. He has excellent discretion and good sense. Few persons have done so much as Hudson to make the study of Shakespeare a part of education. As a textual critic he is often ingenious and acute, but he was perhaps less widely read in Elizabethan literature than is required for sure textual criticism, and I think he was somewhat too ready to displace the old text by clear, but not always needful, emendation."

**114** 31–**115** 2 **Yet the whole thing is totally ignored** etc.: Mr. Horace Howard Furness, on receiving the Harvard Shakespeare, wrote: "I broke away from Christmas festivity and sat down to your Preface, and I need not say I thoroughly admire it. In one or two places where I do not now agree with you I am ready to wait until better wisdom comes to me. I *cannot* disagree with you and feel easy in my conscience."

**116** 9–10 **And now a word as to the ordering of the plays** etc.: In this matter Professor Dowden's *Primer* and Mr. Sidney Lee's *A Life of William Shakespeare* are excellent guides for the student.

**116** 22–27 **This is done merely** etc.: I think Professor Hudson underestimated the value of reading the plays in the order of their creation. If they are, like the works of all great poets, "part of a great confession," then it is of the utmost importance that they be read historically. Professor Dowden has treated this subject with clearness and wisdom in his chapter, "The Teaching of English Literature," *New Studies in Literature.*

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## DANIEL WEBSTER

**119** 13–16 **She has not seen fit** etc.: For an interesting review of Webster's life and his various activities, the student should read *The Proceedings of the Webster Centennial of Dartmouth College, 1901.*

**121** 16–23 **But what, in this regard** etc.: Honorable George F. Hoar, in his speech at the Webster Centennial at Dartmouth College, said: "How many men have there been in this country whose college would celebrate their taking their degree one hundred years afterward? It might have been done for Washington and Lincoln. But they were not college men. It might have been done for Hamilton or Jefferson. But neither Hamilton nor Jefferson got through college, and Jefferson was not in general a favorite with college men. I believe Bowdoin will do it for Longfellow, and I believe Harvard will do it for Emerson. I cannot think of any other. Yet no man will doubt the absolute fitness of the ceremonial to-day."

**122** 13–16 **I had not then learned** etc.: Cf. Mr. E. P. Whipple's admirable essay on *Webster as a Master of English Style.*

In July, 1891, Senator George F. Hoar wrote to me the following in regard to Webster's style: "It is very common, even with accomplished and able critics, to speak of Mr. Webster's style as an example of pure Saxon. This is a great mistake. In a few passages where his mind seems to have been at a white heat his sentences have a rugged Saxon character. But if you open any volume of Mr. Webster's speeches at random and read the first sentences that strike the eye, you will see that his ordinary style is a highly Latinized one. He uses long sentences with dependent clauses, and long words of Latin derivation. Indeed, I think some of our teachers of composition carry their dislike of the use of Latin idioms altogether too far, and that, if their advice were taken, our language would lose a good deal of its variety, its capacity for expression, nice shades of meaning, and its dignity. Persons who wish to cover up the absence of thought by a pompous and inflated style naturally resort to words which come from the Latin, and against them this condemnation is well directed. But the profound thoughts of Daniel Webster, the great and clear distinctions which the course of his arguments required him to draw and to make plain to the

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apprehension of his hearers found suitable expression only by using the great resources of the Latin speech."

**124** 2–4 **while Burke's** etc.: President Woodrow Wilson, in his interesting study of *Burke, the Interpreter of English Liberty*, says: "Burke is not literary because he takes from books, but because he makes books, transmuting what he writes upon into literature. It is this inevitable literary quality, this sure mastery of style, that mark the man, as much as the thought itself."

**124** 26–28 **I am not unmindful** etc.: In regard to this address Honorable E. J. Phelps wrote Dr. Hudson in 1882: "I like your address extremely. It is 'tender and true,' clearly and eloquently put. You are right, in my small estimation, in all you say *except* your comparison of Webster and Burke, in the matter of oratory. Considering the speeches of both as *written essays*, I do not pretend to treat them critically. Very likely you may be correct. But first and last in public speeches, it seems to me, regard is to be had to their immediate effectiveness as such — that union of matter, language, manner, delivery, and timeliness — that makes up oratory. Viewed thus, can there be a comparison between Webster, who chose universal audience, moved and melted all men, and left on their minds and hearts an enduring as well as an immediate result, and Burke, whose speeches, splendidly as they read, always emptied the House? Webster's sounded better than anything ever read, Burke's read better than anything ever sounded. But on the score of oratory, the immediate audience must determine, — not posterity; because it is to them alone it is addressed, however the echo of it may 'thunder down the corridors of time.' And therefore, with due respect and regard for all the mighty dead, I place Webster first and foremost as an *orator*, over all men we have any account of. He alone could put a volume into a sentence, and another into the pause that followed it. He alone could blend consummate logic with the most touching eloquence, in such wise that neither weakened, but each strengthened the other." Honorable S. W. McCall says: "Burke is, I think, superior to Webster as a political philosopher, and also in breadth of information and imaginative power, but in excellence of the great mass of oratorical work which he left behind him he does not much surpass Webster, if at all. . . . The glowing oratory of Edmund Burke will live until sensibility to beauty and

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the generous love of liberty shall die. And I believe the words of Webster, nobly voicing the possibilities of a mighty nation, as yet only dimly conscious of its destiny, will continue to roll upon the ears of men while the nation he helped to fashion shall endure, or indeed while government founded upon popular freedom shall remain an instrument of civilization."

**125** 18–19 **And the two men** etc.: On the occasion of Senator George F. Hoar's visit to Charleston, South Carolina, as the guest of the New England Society in December, 1891, he said: "I have sometimes fancied South Carolina and Massachusetts, these two illustrious and heroic sisters, instead of sitting apart, one under her palm trees and the other under her pines, one with the hot gales from the tropics fanning her brow and the other on the granite rocks of her ice-bound shores, meeting together and comparing notes and stories as sisters born of the same mother compare notes and stories after a long separation. How the old estrangements, born of ignorance of each other, would have melted away!

"Does it ever occur to you that the greatest single tribute ever paid to Daniel Webster was paid by Mr. Calhoun? and the greatest single tribute ever paid to Mr. Calhoun was paid by Mr. Webster?

"I do not believe that among the compliments or marks of honor which attended the illustrious career of Daniel Webster there is one that he would have valued so much as that which his great friend, his great rival and antagonist, paid him from his dying bed.

"'Mr. Webster,' said Mr. Calhoun, 'has as high a standard of truth as any statesman whom I have met in debate. Convince him, and he cannot reply; he is silent; he cannot look truth in the face and oppose it by argument.'

"There was never, I suppose, paid to John C. Calhoun, during his illustrious life, any other tribute of honor he would have valued so highly as that which was paid him after his death by his friend, his rival and antagonist, Daniel Webster.

"'Mr. Calhoun,' said Mr. Webster, 'had the basis, the indispensable basis, of all high character; and that was, unspotted integrity, — unimpeached honor and character. If he had aspirations, they were high and honorable and noble. There was nothing groveling, or low, or meanly selfish that came near the head or the heart of Mr. Calhoun. Firm in his purpose, perfectly patriotic and honest,

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as I was sure he was, in the principles he espoused, and in the measures he defended, aside from that large regard for that species of distinction that conducted him to eminent stations for the benefit of the republic, I do not believe he had a selfish motive or a selfish feeling.'

"Just think for a moment what this means. If any man ever lived who was not merely the representative, but the embodiment of the thought, opinion, principles, character, quality, intellectual and moral, of the people of South Carolina for the forty years from 1810 until his death, it was John C. Calhoun.

"If any man ever lived who not merely was the representative, but the embodiment of the thought, opinion, principles, character, quality, intellectual and moral, of the people of Massachusetts, it was Daniel Webster.

"Now, if after forty years of rivalry, of conflict, of antagonism, these two statesmen of ours most widely differing in opinions on public questions, who never met but to exchange a blow, the sparks from the encounter of whose mighty swords kindled the fires which spread over the continent, thought thus of one another, is it not likely that if the States they represented could have met with the same intimacy, with the same knowledge and companionship during all these years, they, too, would have understood, and understanding, would have loved each other?"

**127** 20–27 **Surely the people** etc.: On the publication of my edition of *Webster's Select Speeches* in 1893, Senator George F. Hoar wrote me: "I wish that every boy and girl in the land would get these speeches by heart."

**128** 3–5 **He was indeed** etc.: Honorable S. W. McCall says: "There can be no doubt as to the majesty of his personal presence. Business would be temporarily suspended when he walked down State Street, while people rushed to doors and windows to see him pass."

On receiving this address on Webster, February 24, 1882, Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote to Dr. Hudson: "Many thanks for your fervid, potent, and eloquent discourse. Mr. Webster's colossal figure is gradually coming out of the mist which gathered around it in the evil days. If he could only have lived through the struggle he could not avert! He was the most impressive human being I ever looked upon. I could not help being pleased when he quoted a

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passage from one of my poems in one of his speeches. That is the way we are made."

**130** 14–17 **In the summer of 1839** etc.: "Mr. Webster approaches as nearly to the *beau ideal* of a republican Senator as any man that I have ever seen in the course of my life; worthy of Rome or Venice rather than of our noisy and wrangling generation." — HALLAM.

"Coleridge used to say that he had seldom known or heard of any great man who had not much of the woman in him. Even so the large intellect of Daniel Webster seemed to be coupled with all softer feelings; and his countenance and bearing, at the very first, impressed me with this. A commanding brow, thoughtful eyes, and a mouth that seemed to respond to all humanities. He deserves his fame, I am sure." — JOHN KENYON.

"He is a magnificent specimen. You might say to all the world, 'This is our Yankee Englishman; such limbs we make in Yankeeland!' As a parliamentary Hercules one would incline to back him at first sight against all the extant world. The tanned complexion; the amorphous craglike face; the dull black eyes under the precipice of brows, like dull anthracite furnaces needing only to be *blown;* the mastiff mouth, accurately closed; I have not traced so much of *silent Berserkir rage* that I remember of in any other man." — THOMAS CARLYLE.

**148** 13–17 **The truth of the matter** etc.: Honorable S. W. McCall says: "In the speeches of some of the leaders of the antislavery movement, denunciation of slavery had the second place and denunciation of Webster the first; and when the time of consummation came, even Lincoln did not escape their acrimony."

**149** 17–23 **As for the speech of the 7th of March** etc.: In a review of that speech as given in Honorable S. W. McCall's *Daniel Webster*, Mr. McCall says: "And had that great statesman on the 7th of March shown any less anxiety for the Union, had that great centripetal force become centrifugal or weakened in the attraction which it exerted to hold the States in their orbits, who shall say that our magnificent and now united domain might not be cursed by two hostile flags, one of which would float over a republic founded upon slavery!"

**153** 6–7 **It was written in 1850** etc.: This poem has something of the spirit of Browning's *Lost Leader*, which has been considered as

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a mild thrust at Wordsworth for the conservatism of his later life, although Browning confessed that he "used the great and venerated personality of Wordsworth only as a sort of painter's model, and not as portraying the entire man." Of Webster's treatment as a result of the 7th of March speech, Honorable S. W. McCall says: "And then there is that ill-omened thing which, wherever else it may be found, is sure to attend greatness. The baleful goddess of Detraction sits ever at the elbow of Fame, unsweetening what is written upon the record. . . . This proof of greatness, such as it is, exists in ample measure in the history of Webster. No man since Washington has had more of it. The pity of it all is, that when an unsupported charge is disproved, some people will shake their heads and say it is very unfortunate that it should have been necessary to establish innocence; as if reproof belonged rather to the innocent victim than to the author of the calumny."

**153** 23–28 **It is but fair to add** etc.: Honorable George F. Hoar says: "Whittier, who had written *Ichabod*, brought his imperishable tribute of affection and honor, which, alas! was never placed on the brow of Webster, but only laid on his grave."

**156** 22–26 **Yes, the great soul of Daniel Webster** etc.: Honorable S. W. McCall says of the *Reply to Hayne:* "It was this speech more than any other single event, from the adoption of the Constitution to the Civil War, which compacted the States into a nation. There were comparatively few people in the country able to read and to follow public affairs who did not read the more important portions of it. The leading newspapers published it in full. Vast numbers of copies were sent out in the form of pamphlets. It was declaimed by schoolboys in every schoolhouse. It gave the nation a definite impulse towards nationality, and it laid down the battle line for those splendid armies which fought and triumphed in the cause of the Union."

**162** 2–7 **His memory will out-tongue** etc.: At the opening exercises of the Webster Centennial of Dartmouth College, on September 25, 1901, President Tucker said: "Webster's influence is vital to-day in the thought and feelings of men in respect to the country. We have learned, we have begun to learn, to think about the country in his terms, and to feel about it as he felt. His conceptions were so great that they could find room only in his own mind.

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They belong to the United States of to-day, not to the nation of his time. Thus far Webster is the only man who has comprehended the American people. Until a greater American than he shall arise, he will live in the still unfulfilled destiny of the Republic."

Chief Justice Melville W. Fuller, at the Webster Centennial of Dartmouth College, said: "Nearly forty-nine years ago, an undergraduate on leave of absence for the purpose, I attended the funeral of Mr. Webster at Marshfield. The beauty of that October day; the majestic aspect of the great lawyer and advocate, statesman and orator, as he lay in his accustomed habiliments under the spreading branches of a beautiful tree in front of the mansion; and the walk of neighbors and friends, distinguished personages and others, over the fields to the grave, are still vivid in my memory. As a youth I paid that tribute to Daniel Webster, an incident quite unimportant save to the boy himself, and I repeat it now after a lapse of nearly fifty years, with the added significance involved in the office I hold, whose incumbent, if another than myself, would have been fully justified, as I am, in bearing witness as such to the immortality of a fame so connected with the administration of justice, and with the vindication of liberty as the creation of law, that, to use his own language, it 'is and must be as durable as the frame of human society.'"

It is interesting to note that when the poll was taken for the one hundred greatest names in American history, to be placed in the Hall of Fame, Washington stood first in the list, while Lincoln and Webster tied for the second place.

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